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FBIS-LAT-94-089 *9 May 1994*

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Cuba

Castro, 15 Leaders Meet To Ratify Resolution

FL0705000694 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] This afternoon in Barbados, Cuban President Fidel Castro stated that nongovernmental organizations [NGO's] have become a powerful force in international politics. Fidel is participating in the First International Small Island Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, and met in Bridgetown with NGO representatives from the Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas, and the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. At the beginning of the colloquy, (Jean Preanch), spokeswoman for the Caribbean organizations, stressed the support to Cuba that was demonstrated in the recently concluded NGO summit, which rejected the U.S. blockade against Cuba.

Fidel applauded the manifestations of support and solidarity and received tremendous applause from the crowd when he stated: We feel among you that we are among friends, brothers. This is why I leave Barbados and this conference very happy.

In his closing statements, Castro stressed the importance of the Barbados summit for organizing an action strategy to defend the islands from serious, looming problems such as pollution, radioactive wastes, and climate changes.

This afternoon, Fidel met behind close doors with the other 15 heads of state in attendance to ratify the final version of the Barbados Resolution and the action plan that will close the meeting.

Further on Castro's Activities

FL0705011694 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 94

[Text] Today, Commander in Chief Fidel Castro is completing the second day of his official visit to Barbados on the occasion of the Global Conference on Small Developing Island States. Reporter Ruben Pino will give us further details on this.

[Begin Pino recording] The plan of action and the Barbados Declaration were finally approved today after an extensive workday of this First Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, during which the floor was given to the 13 speakers who were unable to speak during the previous session.

Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, who yesterday afternoon presided over the final part of that top-level meeting, also joined the roundtable meeting of chiefs of states and of governments, who held a meeting behind closed doors as of 1130 this morning.

During the final day of sessions in the (Cherbun) Center, Commander in Chief Fidel Castro met with Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, President of the Global Conference and Prime Minister of Barbados. Sandiford said his country is continuously working for everything related to the Caribbean and outside the region, seeking Cuba's full integration into the American system in an effort to overcome the current differences. The Barbadian prime minister added that Cuba as a Caribbean nation plays an important role in the development of the region and of the hemisphere.

Likewise, the Cuban president said he was impressed by the independent position the Carribean region adopted throughout its history concerning Cuba, and expressed interest in tightening relations within the context and objectives of the Association of the Caribbean States.

Fidel Castro also stressed the delegates' contribution to the debate, adding that Cuba will work for the implementation of all the decisions adopted by the conference in its plan of action.

Late this afternoon, Fidel Castro also held a meeting with approximately 100 representatives of nongovernmental organizations [NGO's] who participated in the Conference of Small Island Developing States.

During this meeting, (Jian Frenz), coordinator of nongovernmental organizations from the Caribbean, briefed the Cuban president about the resolutions adopted by the participants of that forum in support of the Cuban people's right to their development, and against the U.S. blockade. In this exchange of ideas, the commander in chief expressed his recognition of the growing power of the NGO's and the important contribution they have made in creating an awareness of the need to take care of the environment, an awareness he did not perceive among politicians during the Rio de Janeiro summit.

Fidel Castro also expressed thanks for the solidarity and support for the Cuban people, and underscored the contribution of the government representatives during the forum paralleling the global conference. He added that the influence of good ideas can be felt everywhere, and also within the NGO's. You are leaving us a valuable experience and for this reason, the feelings of dignity, independence, and honor are present in each of you, and they are part of the great battle you are waging. [end recording]

Castro Gives News Conference

FL0705184194 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 7 May 94

[Text] Today, Commander in Chief Fidel Castro placed a wreath at the spot where a Cuban plane crashed in 1976, victim of a criminal sabotage. Outstanding sportsmen who were returning home bringing many trophies for the fatherland died in this accident.

In Bridgetown, our top leader assessed some aspects of the Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island States with the local and foreign press. Conference

special correspondent Gisela Bel Heredia has provided a portion of the news conference granted by Fidel Castro in Bridgetown:

[Begin recording] [Heredia] Do you feel satisfied with this first visit to a Caribbean state?

[Castro] Yes, very much so. And now I would like to know this island better because during the days of the conference one gets to know only the streets and buildings. But the people are very friendly, very educated, and hospitable. I am taking home a very good impression of them.

[Unidentified reporter] Would you ratify the idea that Cuba has attended this forum with a very broad political commitment with the people of this island?

[Castro] Of course. It could not be otherwise. It could not be different. These contacts began in Rio de Janeiro with the group of island states, and I was able to perceive a great concern conveyed by all those countries, namely over the climatic changes and the increase in water level. The situation of these islands is very dramatic. It is a situation of life or death because a phenomenon of this nature is much more serious for them more than for anybody else.

[Reporter] But many developed nations have been absent or are absent from this conference.

[Castro] Yes, they were absent, but I have noticed a little more awareness concerning this problem, more than what I saw in Rio de Janeiro.

[Reporter] Do you think this conference of the Caribbean states will pave the road for closer relations?

[Castro] Well, the path was being paved, and we hope it will contribute to a tighter relationship. It is very important to get to know the leaders, to become aware of their way of thinking, and as you know, I was not absent a single minute from this event. I do not know whether you have been here all this time and seen everything.

[Reporter] Yes, we have been here. The Barbadian prime minister has said he will try to overcome all differences seeking Cuba's integration into the organization of Caribbean states. What are those differences?

[Castro] He was not referring to differences between us; between us there are no...

[Reporter, interrupting] No, but to some obstacles that could exist in...

[Castro, interrupting] The obstacles are well known. [end recording]

The Cuban president today held a meeting with Governor General Nita Barrow, sister of the late Barbadian Prime Minister (Harold) Barrow. Fidel said that for him, it was a commitment to make this visit because the current governor general is the sister of the former president who had excellent relations with Cuba. Today, he has scheduled meetings with reporters from the regional news agency CANA and from the Caribbean Broadcasting Union [preceding words in English] teievision station which transmits for the entire area.

Today, Fidel Castro is scheduled to visit the Rainbow Warrior boat of the ecologist group, Green Peace. This boat has anchored at Bridgetown port with an onboard fair on sustainable technology in environment preservation.

Bridgetown, capital and main port of the Barbados islands, with a little more than 20,000 inhabitants, has just been the place of one of the most important meetings this year for the not very much publicized alliance of small island states.

The first Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island States, which concluded its sessions yesterday, approved its plan of action and the Barbados declaration as the guide for sustainable development of the smallest islands.

But can there be sustainable development in one single part of the world, and development in all other countries? And can there be such development in extremely wealthy societies which believe that only by growing will they survive, and which can grow only at the cost of all its natural resources? Why do they need more wealth? President Fidel Castro referred to these questions in the speech he delivered at the conference held at the (Cherbrum Center) in Bridgetown.

From the very beginning, Fidel said the poor and the small countries always try to know how are we going to survive in the next decades, while the powerful nations discuss ways for a new distribution in the world. For the super developed societies, the problem is not to grow but to distribute, and not only to distribute among themselves but to distribute among all.

The Cuban president then said that sustainable development is impossible without a more just distribution among all nations. Whether we want it or not, today, mankind is a single family, and we will all have the same fate. We must use less deceitful words and change the current philosophy because this selfish philosophy has only served to cause the catastrophies we are suffering today and the worse ones we will suffer in the future.

Shortly after the Cuban president's speech, Barbadian Foreign Minister Branford Taitt told Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina during a bilateral meeting that no foreign pressure can prevent the Caribbean community from taking the necessary steps to reinstate Cuba into the economic mechanisms of the Caribbean Community and into the future Association of Caribbean States.

He also said that Fidel Castro's speech to the plenary session of the conference was brilliant. He added that his presence in Bridgetown has enhanced the conference and

has helped to establish fundamental elements in the strategies for sustainable development of small islands.

Expressions of solidarity were also conveyed to Roberto Robaina during bilateral meetings. Robaina said: We hope and wish that ties will be strengthened between Cuba and the rest of the Caribbean islands, and we can cooperate to help Cuba overcome its current problems.

Castro Views U.S. Blockade, South Africa

FL0805232694 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 8 May 94

[Excerpts of interview with President Fidel Castro by Caribbean Braodcasting Union reporter Sharon Marshall, in Barbados, date not given, passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] During the interview granted to the Caribbean Broadcasting Union, Fidel discussed the results of the Small Island Nations Summit.

[Castro, in Spanish with simultaneous translation into English] "I believe this summit is a continuation of the Rio Summit. The Rio Summit was extremely important since it helped to build an awareness about environmental issues. Politicians are not usually very well informed about these matters. I believe that in Rio, for the first time, they faced up to the tragedy that environmental degradation means for the world. At that time, they were undergoing a learning process.

"At this conference, I noticed an increased awareness among politicians, and more awareness among industrialized nations, more than in Rio, and within a short period of time. Since Rio, politicians from island states have of course been more aware than anyone else. I recall that members of our delegation had had contact with representatives from these countries, and they were truly distressed by future prospects."

Fidel also made reference to the historic victory of the South African people in the recent elections that brought an end to apartheid.

[Castro] "The work that took place helped preserve the independence of Angola, reaffirmed the independence of Namibia, and accelerated the disappearance of apartheid. I think it helped accelerate the process. Namibia, in any case, would have become independent sooner or later. Sooner or later, apartheid would have disappeared because apartheid was intolerable in today's world. The South African people, like the people of Namibia, fought hard and long, made many sacrifices, and attained their goals. I believe they had great leaders. They are a great, extremely courageous, hard fighting, energetic, intelligent, capable people. They have reached this point.

"We have to study the period from after the end of the war, the period of the elections, and the extraordinary role played by Mandela—his leadership talent, his wisdom. He was an unifying force, overcame every obstacle, and remained firm. He was flexible in achieving this political miracle, these elections in which everyone participated and which achieved such a resounding victory. It was a great victory for the people of South Africa, a great victory for Africa, for the world, and for the liberal movement. I believe we all now need to contribute to support harmony and peace."

Fidel reiterated the conditions necessary for the normalization of ties between Cuba and the United States.

[Castro] "First of all, for the blockade to end. It is an unfair, harsh, cruel blockade, which includes medicines and foodstuffs. It was imposed on Cuba 35 years ago. It is one of the longest blockades in history, and the most unjustified of all.

"Second, for the United States to resign itself to the fact that Cuba is an independent, sovereign country. Third, respect for our people's right to choose the political, social, and economic system they believe most fair. These are the three essential factors. We do not have anything against the United States. We have not blockaded the United States. We do not want to change the U.S. social system; we do not seek to establish socialism in the United States. This, in any case, would be as complicated as establishing capitalism in Russia. They are similar things, given the characteristics of these countries. We are therefore not trying to rule the United States, nor diminish its independence one iota. It is not that we have a problem with the United States. It is the United States that has a problem with us."

Castro Views Barbados Visit

PA0805161194 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 8 May 94

[Report on an interview with President Fidel Castro by station reporter Gisela Veleredia in Georgetown; date not given—recorded]

[Text] In what was considered the most important aspect of the Cuban delegation's visit to Barbados, President Fidel Castro placed a wreath at the very place where a Barbados airliner [as heard] crashed in 1976. Several members of the Cuban fencing team died in the accident, along with other Caribbean citizens. The commander in chief, visibly moved, said he had thought about this moment from the time he decided to travel to Barbados. He also gave us his opinion on the decisions made at the First World Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island States.

[Begin recording] [Veleredia] What do the expressions of solidarity you received from the Caribbean leaders at this conference mean for Cuba?

[Castro] Such expressions of solidarity and friendship have always been extremely important to us as this [words indistinct].

[Veleredia] Did you think of this moment when you decided to come to Barbados?

[Castro] Yes, it was the first thing I thought about.

[Veleredia] Do you think that every Cuban who travels to Barbados thinks of the events that took place here?

[Castro] What is this place called? It is not very far from where the tragedy occurred.

[Veleredia] [Words indistinct] opportunity?

[Castro] There always is and there always will be.

[Veleredia] Could you comment on the other activities of the day in this first visit to Barbados?

[Castro] I have been able to do several things. I met with the media and had several other individual meetings. Later today I will visit the governor, who is the [word indistinct] and the minister of justice.

[Veleredia] [Words indistinct]

[Castro] They were very friendly toward Cuba. I expect to see a few other things and meet some of the country's leaders of [words indistinct].

[Veleredia] Are you pleased with this first visit to an English-speaking Caribbean nation?

[Castro] Very pleased, but I have not really had a chance to get to know the people. I have only seen the streets and buildings. The people here are very warm and welcoming and very polite. I have been very impressed.

[Unidentified reporter] After meeting with the people of this island, do you still maintain that Cuba came to this forum with a broad based political commitment?

[Castro] Or course. You cannot come to this meeting or this country with any other idea. Contacts with these island nations were initiated in Rio de Janeiro. I felt the enormous concern these nations have about the changing climate and the rising waters. They are experiencing a dramatic situation. This is a matter of life or death to them. Any natural phenomenon would have the same effect on any country, but it has a greater importance for these people.

[Reporter] Even when many developed nations [words indistinct].

[Castro] They have been absent, but I perceive a greater degree of awareness about these problems than there was in Rio de Janeiro.

[Veleredia] Do you think this meeting and your visit will pave the way for closer relations?

[Castro] The road is already being paved. Anything that works in that direction will contribute to closer ties. It is very important to talk with the leaders and learn what they are thinking. You know I did not miss a minute of the conference. [Words indistinct] I congratulate you because you were there all the time.

[Veleredia] The prime minister of Barbados said he would work to solve the differences that prevent Cuba from becoming part of the Organization of Caribbean States. What are the major differences?

[Castro] There are no differences between us.

[Veleredia] I meant the obstacles to Cuban integration.

[Castro] The ones that already exist and are known. [end recording]

The commander in chief defied the ridges and climbed down to the beach to allow the (?waves) to touch his feet, thus honoring the martyrs who died in Barbados. Today the commander was to continue his agenda here in Barbados, which includes a visit with Governor Nita Barrow.

Castro Denies Poor Health

FL0705130894 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 7 May 94

[Text] On 6 May at the first Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, President Fidel Castro said nongovernment organizations [NGO's] have become a very powerful force in international policy.

In an informal meeting with NGO representatives from the Caribbean, Pacific, Mediterranean, and Atlantic regions at the (Sherbon Center) in Bridgetown, Fidel Castro said these organizations are fully aware of policies concerning environmental and other matters.

At the beginning of the meeting, (Jean Franz), coordinator of such Caribbean organizations, recalled the support expressed for Cuba in the recently concluded forum of those organizations. A resolution was approved defending the Cuban people's right to choose its own model for alternative development and condemning the U.S. Administration for the economic and financial blockade against Cuba

Fidel Castro expresssed thanks for the expressions of support and solidarity and added: We must change the negative environment the United States has created around Cuba with the blockade which prompts serious problems in the supply of foodstuff, medicines, and many other products essential to our development.

Fidel Castro received lengthy applause from the people when he said: We feel like friends, like brethren among you, and for this reason I am leaving this country and this conference with a feeling of joy.

Among other subjects discussed during the informal meeting, the Cuban leader joked about speculations on the state of his health which appeared in the local press and about which he was asked several times by reporters from a Miami television station who traveled to Bridgetown on learning of the Cuban statesman's presence in that capital.

You are continuously asking me about the state of my health, and whether I sat down before and after the speech at the plenary session. In fact, I can no longer do the many things I used to do in Sierra Maestra days, but I still walk a great deal and swim for several hours, Castro said.

In his final remarks, Fidel Castro underscored the importance of that meeting in organizing an action strategy to defend the islands from the serious problems that are threatening them, such as pollution, radioactive wastes, and climatic changes.

Havana Notes 'Clouded' Ties Between PRC, U.S.

FL0605153094 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1408 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] Despite apparent positive signs, the bilateral relations between China and the United States today seem more clouded than ever. Diplomatic circles in Beijing said that they had evidently reached another crossroad in their relations, pointing out that the PRC lodged a strong protest to the United State's adoption of a congressional ruling that contains stipulations against China. According to reports, legislation of foreign relations for 1994 and 1995 assumes a position toward Taiwan and Tibet different from those included in the communiques signed by Beijing and Washington to regulate diplomatic relations.

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Tian Zengpei pointed out that the ruling was a deliberate attempt to frustrate reunification and that it goes against the commitment of recognizing only one China, which includes Taiwan.

Ross Addresses ANPP on Workers Parliaments

FL0605140294 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1955 GMT 1 May 94

[Speech by Pedro Ross Leal, secretary general of the Cuban Workers Federation, during the morning session of the National Assembly of the People's Government in Havana, ANPP, on 1 May—recorded]

[Text] Comrade Alarcon, I would now like to present to the assembly a report on the results of the workers parliaments for consideration during this session's debates.

We meet here today to summarize the meaning and possible development of a democratic process capable of earning the prestige of being useful and of establishing itself as a feasible method for popular participation in the solution to our economic problems.

Above all, we face a promising, encouraging path that categorically confirms that the economic solutions demanded by pressing reality must be identified by the people as their own, based on the greatest possible consensus and in such a way that their reasons are understood, so that the gates can open for collective action on an efficient economy that ensures the preservation and development of our socialist society.

In looking at the results of the assembly process, the Parliaments in the Workplaces, which had the participation of approximately 3 million workers throughout the country who debated the economic problems of each center and added to the arsenal of ideas that could be activated to restructure internal finances, we express our profound joy that the workers throughout the entire nation, in all work centers, in the immense majority of their proposals demonstrated patriotism, honor, and the will to do whatever is required to save the Revolution, just as Fidel requested during his intervention in the last special session of the ANPP.

The labor union movement can take credit for having organized the workers parliaments, for having interpreted Fidel's thoughts and the conclusions of the fourth plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] regarding the importance of avoiding a technocratic focus in the solutions, beginning from the point that without the understanding and will of the workers and the people, no problems can be solved and no measures can do any good.

In the short time between December and today, we prepared our cadres, we summoned the workers to hold the parliaments, and we held meetings with more than 80,000 labor union sectors, which had the support of the party and government, as well as the active participation of our deputies and the presidency of the ANPP.

We believe that the administration of the work centers, noticeably advancing with regard to their prior experience, decisively supported this process and became worthy of the workers' recognition, most of whom appreciated the quality of the report to the assembly and their cooperation, for a frank and realistic discussion on the problems of each center.

For 45 days, the country became an immense school on economics and politics, in which much was learned and during which it was realized that much remains to be learned, investigated, and renovated in the specific economic sphere of each work center.

The press has played a distinctive role, contributing with convincing arguments and with real reflection in the debates to enrich and stimulate the participation of the workers, who in this process came to a greater understanding of the complex situation we face and of the need to continue taking measures with the greatest care, without anxious haste, focusing on reactivating the economy, producing more and better with available resources under conditions of the blockade and special period.

Comrades, the work has just begun. Let us take heart in the fact that the workers considered these parliaments worthwhile. Above all, let us think of the long road ahead of us in all senses. An analysis of the innumerable suggestions made by the workers is not a one-day task.

Today, we should confine ourselves to synthesis of the people's thought, which is essentially connected in economic terms with a more profound political and ideological culture, but which does not achieve the desired correspondence.

Let us make way for this synthesis and let us remember that the assemblies included points that reconfirm the wisdom of the collective intelligence and the provisions of immutable loyalty toward the Revolution and socialism, as well as indications of confusion; reminiscences of an economic mentality that should develop even further; and, in some respects, ideas that have nothing to do with today's efficiency reality.

The debates in the workers parliaments expressed a great coincidence that the enterprises should reach profitability based on efficient work and the proper use of materials and financial resources, without elevating prices, and placing emphasis on the reduction of costs.

In a great many meetings, the companies have been urged to seek and find alternative formulas to increase their income by means of a secondary, or side, production which, without detriment to the principal production, will result in greater exploitation of material and human resources.

The workers have underscored in many meetings the need to reduce subsidies to companies to the point of eliminating all but those that can be fully justified.

Another matter that was thoroughly analyzed in the meetings was cost reduction. At the same time, measures have been outlined so that workers will be able to participate in the analysis and control of expenditures, and so that this control will be resolutely carried out in those places where the expenditures are incurred but not the way it is done now, and that this situation be handled by exclusive areas that centralize the information and analyses.

We must note that in many places, the workers have learned that their respective companies have not been profitable. They have realized the amount of losses and consequent subsidies. So they voiced their complaints that positive actions must be taken concerning costs and expenditures of both the budgeted units and those conceived to attain revenues and profit.

Workers everywhere also noted the need for administrations in the future to provide systematic information on these aspects, to the workers, with the purpose of encouraging the struggle for efficiency and to facilitate the economic analyses in each unit.

One of the most often repeated proposals was that of improving human services in all centers. Likewise, there is an overwhelming consensus concerning the need to increase the control of state assets, with the dual purpose of reducing production costs and preventing the main sources from going to the black market and to criminal acts.

The workers have repeatedly called for improvement of the labor law in an effort to eliminate its paternalistic content and to adjust it to the needs of production and labor efficiency.

The subject of labor and technological and administrative discipline was discussed in several meetings and from differing points of view. The workers especially referred to the lack of administrative exigency and to the pernicious effect of the current system of medical certificates and reports.

In many thousands of meetings, the workers stressed the idea that an efficient increase in production and services is the essential way to stabilize internal finances and to achieve an adequate provision to the people.

The delicate and complex problem of the reorganization of personnel rosters and reinstatement of personnel was broadly debated. There was an overwhelming consensus on the need to adopt measures to improve worker productivity, to reduce costs, and to efficiently organize production.

In many places where there is an obvious excess labor force, the workers themselves, whose posts can be the object of rationalization, have called for the initiation of this process, confident that in the Revolution, they will find just solutions and that no one will be neglected; and that people will always work for the development of economically justifiable job opportunities.

Streamlining Internal Finances

The issue of streamlining internal finances has gained major impetus in the discussions in the workplace parliaments, to the extent that these discussions developed.

The proposals to charge for services that are currently free, to change prices, to impose new taxes, and others, unlike the subjects related to economic efficiency, have prompted various reactions. However, it has been verified that the development of the debates has contributed to clarification and consolidation of the inevitable need to adopt effective measures to streamline internal finances.

One fact has been confirmed by this process throughout the country. It has to do with the overwhelming consensus among Cuban workers that education and health care in our society must remain free of charge, arguing that these are achievements of the Revolution and must be maintained.

However, in many places, the workers proposed charging for cosmetic surgery and similar services. Some have even proposed charging for dental care services. Others have proposed charging those responsible for traffic accidents and physical aggressions, feeling that they should pay for the medical assistance given to their victims.

Others have reaffirmed the proposal to pay for basic school supplies and uniforms, although others proposed

the payment only in case of losses. To a lesser extent, workers proposed distribution of expendable material free of charge the first time, but selling it at accessible prices afterwards throughout the year.

Some parliaments proposed charging for school supplies at high school and university levels, while other parliaments proposed charging in accordance with the income of the student's family. Some parliaments proposed charging for university and postgraduate studies in languages and others are not considered basic education. Other parliaments proposed charging when the student abandons his studies, or when as a graduate he does not work in the field he studied.

Another proposal was that of charging at the semiboarding schools as in the case of childcare centers, as well as other free services in the education area, especially when there is a change in career or in lodging, and also for the food the students eat in boarding schools.

The workers also made repeated analyses of the possibility of charging for services which are not considered essential in other aspects of the country's life. In several meetings the workers underscored the idea that the state must consider maintaining some free services that are suitable; in other meetings, but in a lesser extent, the workers considered the possibility of eliminating all free services.

Among the free services not considered essential, to which the workers referred in the meetings, in addition to those already discussed and which have to do with health and education, are the following: charging for civil registery office services and for some spraying services; eliminating free delivery of products and foods to workers in certain places; increasing taxes on vehicles; charging modest prices for personal protection means, public bathrooms, and some funeral services; charging drug stores for the distribution of vitamins; charging cyclists for use of roads; charging tolls in tunnels, on highways, etc.

In several meetings the workers proposed charging for cultural activities, excepting entrance fees for children. In some parliaments the workers proposed charging tickets at indoor events and with professional artists. Workers also repeated the proposal to charge modest prices for sports events. Very few proposed not charging for these events.

Many parliaments also agreed on the need to charge for recreational activities. Workers proposed the need to increase these activities, especially for children and youth, proposing in some cases turning movie theaters into video arcades because the movie theaters are not being used.

The workers parliaments have also analyzed the use of prices to reduce excess currency in circulation. They proposed the direct sale to workers of products coming from the worker centers, charging for services such as state transport, including those with red license plates. The workers also proposed the use of vehicles from the different organizations to collect the money, incentivizing the driver with a percentage of revenues.

In general, there was consensus concerning the idea of not increasing transport tariffs, although some parliaments have proposed this. Among the proposals made we can mention that of increasing the prices of gasoline, lubricants, and accessories.

In many meetings the workers proposed eliminating alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, and tobacco in general from the ration book, selling them freely but increasing their prices. However, some meetings were against the increase in prices, or at least they proposed a moderate increase. Some also proposed keeping them in the ration book.

In other meetings the workers proposed maintaining the established cigarette quota but eliminating the additional quota and imposing a fixed price for those that are sold freely. Among the analyzed aspects we can also mention the alternative to encourage the formation of accounts for workers' and peasants' funds. The People's Savings Bank has also been urged to pay higher interest rates so as to foment savings.

Concerning prices in the foods area, the workers have proposed a revision, saying that prices must be in line with quality. There were also proposals saying that prices of some services are too high and that not all workers have access to those services.

Concerning the price of food in the workers' cafeterias, the workers also proposed a revision in order to adjust them in accordance with reasonable costs and the quality of the food, although many parliaments were against a readjustment of prices.

There were repeated proposals to charge for water, especially imposing a higher price on those who waste water. But there were many more proposals to raise electricity rates, especially for excessive use above a given quota.

Workers also agreed on an increase in telephone rates provided that service is also improved. There were fewer proposals not to charge for water or to increase the electricity rate.

There was an overwhelming consensus against the imposition of tax on salaries, although some parliaments were also in favor of a tax on salaries.

On several occasions the workers proposed the idea of subsidizing low-income families to protect them from price readjustments.

In many parliaments there were proposals to take into consideration the income of self-employed workers at the time of implementing the new tax. Other parliaments have directly proposed that high taxes be imposed on the

income of self-employed workers. Some also proposed charging a tax on peasants in accordance with their income.

The complex [passage indistinct] in the workers parliaments where there were many proposals to implement them. Fewer proposals were against implementing them, arguing that the country is not prepared for this and that it would not resolve the financial problem.

There was almost absolute consensus in the discussions on the confiscation of the money and other resources of doubtful origin from all those who have accrued wealth illegally.

During the discussions the workers in different parliaments proposed the revision and amendment of the penal code, while others proposed the implementation of stronger punishments on those citizens who commit crimes, especially economic crimes.

We understand that the first duty of the union movement is to urge the workers to strengthen their fighting morale, to prevent them from becoming discouraged, to strengthen their confidence that we will be successful, and to assure that whatever we do will preserve socialism and its essential achievements. We must continue developing our awareness and spirit to understand the sacrifice that is implicit in these measures, which are inevitable to save what is essential.

Likewise, we must meditate on the great lines of action awaiting the unions. The Parliaments in the Workplace have demonstrated their validity as a method of rapport on the situation that is in the interest of the workers and administrative leaders for the study of basic problems and the collective quest for solutions, starting from the individual contribution and united with the administrations, the union organizations, and the political leadership. We must learn lessons from all this: the need to be more communicative and to maintain a continuous presence in the centers, to teach and learn, to learn how to establish a closer relationship with our union members, to convey the experience of how to solve the problems that are worrying the workers, to interpret them and help them find a solution.

Changing what has been achieved in the workers parliaments into a permanent style and method of union work implies, above all, the revitalization and perfection of the role of the unions which must use the authority bestowed upon them as representatives of the true owners of the means of production, and thereby to wage an ideological war against any way of thinking that could obstruct the country's development and the path to efficiency. To say it in another way: We must tirelessly fight against anything that affects the workers' interests, be it labor or technological indiscipline, lack of control, or the bureacratic web which delays the solutions of problems; favors apathy, idleness, irresponsibility; and does not concern itself when resources are lost or are insufficiently exploited.

The battle for economic efficiency is not just a temporary slogan under the difficult Cuban economic situation, but the central aspect for which the unions and our CTC must work.

In compliance with the workers' demands in several centers throughout the country, the CTC National Secretariat has decided to give a new profile to the Assemblies of Production and Service, replacing them by the Assemblies for Economic Efficiency which will pay special attention to these decisive objectives of our work. This objective is giving new life to the spirit of the workers parliaments in each task or union activity in which we might be engaged; that frank, critical, and self-critical analysis must prevail everywhere, seeking not justification where there is none but solutions that can be implemented with the presence and active participation of all those interested.

After verifying once again the workers' indestructible loyalty to the Revolution, and after verifying in dozens of thousands of meetings that the Cuban workers, above the current sacrifices and deprivations, are willing to fight with all their might to maintain the integrity of the fatherland and the achievements of socialism, we cannot but strengthen our commitment to Fidel and to the people, that the Cuban union movement will be, today and always, a bulwark of the revolutionary spirit, a tireless and tenacious force of the resistance and of the victory our people deserve.

Fatherland or death, socialism or death, we will win. [applause]

This has been our report, comrade president.

Officials Said Involved in Illegal Vehicle Sales

FL0605145494 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 5 May 94

[Text] Politburo members Carlos Lage, Jose Ramon Machado Ventura, and Ricardo Alarcon chaired a recent meeting with presidents of Administrative Councils where they analyzed the budget, self-employment, the local industry, and the illegal sale of vehicles and homes.

With regard to the national budget, it was determined that it has presented positive signs during the first two months of the year. Holguin was the only province to register an improvement in its own income.

The analysis on self-employment established that some craftsmen employ other people in their production, using energy and raw material of doubtful origin. It was also mentioned that in many cases it is not a craft activity, but rather an industrial activity. With the purpose of detecting any undercover illegality, the participants at the meeting agreed to review all licenses granted those calling themselves craftsmen.

Another important point of the discussion was the sale of vehicles received as incentives and the illegal buying and

selling of homes. The analysis determined that intellectuals, laborers, cadres, and public officials have been involved in buying and selling cars and motorcycles. It was recalled that the state has a legal and moral right to appropriate these goods because their owners signed and accepted a contract stipulating that the state has preference over the vehicle when the owner no longer has use for it.

Regarding houses, its was also pointed out that the existing law, which states that the right to own real estate must not become a mechanism of gain or exploitation, is being violated. It was explained that rigorous action will be taken in the event of these illegal acts and that sanctions will be extended indefinitely and constantly reviewed to prevent future occurrences.

Provincial Councils Meeting Agenda Reviewed

FL0605123794 Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] On 5 May, GRANMA carries an article by Susana Lee regarding issues debated at a meeting of presidents of the provincial Administrative Councils and the Isle of Youth convened by the secretariat of the Council of Ministers. The issues discussed were the national budget, self-employment, local industries, and illegal sales of vehicles and houses.

It was announced that the budget showed generally positive signs in the first months and that if this were to continue, the deficit could diminish by 1 billion pesos in 1994 in relation to last year.

Regarding self-employment, it was decided to review all the licenses issued to artisans in order to detect any irregularity and act accordingly; to suspend licenses issued to artisans in plastic, and give these workers the option of rejoining local industries; and to leave in the hands of the Administrative Councils the option of extending or issuing the licenses deemed necessary.

The report on local industries showed that the drop in production this year is basically due to the reallocation of supplies to sectors with a higher popular demand, the fact that most local industry plastic product workers shifted to the self-employed sector, and a drop in basic resources.

An important discussion was held on measures implemented to confront the illegal sale and purchase of homes, as well as violations in the sale of vehicles given as incentives by owners who then disregard the state's first purchase option to buy them. The state has the legal and moral right to seize these goods given the fact that their owners, at the time of purchase, accepted a contract establishing the state's first purchase option for vehicles when the owner no longer wanted them. Regarding houses, on the basis of principles established in current law, under no circumstances can the personal house ownership right become a tool for profiting or exploitation.

It was stressed at the meeting that the law will be implemented vigorously and permanently and will continue to be modified to avoid recurrence in the future.

Politburo members Carlos Lage, Jose Ramon Machado Ventura, and Ricardo Alarcon chaired the meeting which included the participation of numerous ministers, other Communist Party of Cuba officials, cadres, and state and administration officials involved with the diverse issues discussed.

[Radio Rebelde at 1948 GMT on 5 May adds that Finance and Prices Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez also participated in the meeting.]

Electric Outages Scheduled for 5-6 May

FL0605120894 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 2235 GMT 5 May 94

[Text] Outages have been taking place due to the electric generation deficit of the National Electric System, mainly the shutdown for maintenance of the most powerful generator unit in Cuba, Matanzas' Antonio Guiteras plant.

Tonight from 1900 to 0000, outages are scheduled for Guanabacoa, Regla, Cotorro, San Miguel del Padron, Centro Habana, Habana Vieja, Habana del Este, Marianao, Playa, and La Lisa Municipalities as well as areas of other municipalities on the same circuits.

On 6 May, Friday, outages are scheduled for Marianao, Playa, La Lisa, Boyeros, 10 de Octubre, and Arroyo Naranjo Municipalities will experienced outages from 0500 to 0900 and from 1300 to 1900. Likewise, Centro Habana, Habana Vieja, Habana del Este, Plaza, Cerro, Guanabacoa, Regla, Cotorro, and San Miguel del Padron Municipalities will experience scheduled outages from 0900 to 1300 and from 1900 to 0000. This information was provided by Arturo Mora de la Cruz.

Barbados

Fidel Castro Comments on Haitian Crisis

FL0605221194 Castries HTS Caribvision in English 1945 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] For some, one of the highlights of the SIDS [Small Islands Developing States] Conference is the attendance of Communist leader Fidel Castro, one of several leaders who graced the conference with his presence. For journalists, on the other hand, it represented an opportunity to quiz the leader about whom so much has been spoken, and even speculated, the most recent being rumors of ill health. This was clearly not the case as President Castro appeared full of spirit and [words indistinct] with a little difficlty and requiring some assistance, was able to handle even the toughest flight of steps.

The man often described as a recluse was more than eager to chat with members of the press at one of the

many social functions which characterize [word indistinct] of this nature. Among the questions posed to the Communist leader was the Haitian crisis, and the role of the democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Speaking through an interpreter, Castro was of the opinion that President Aristide should return to Haiti and continue to fight for his rightful place.

[Begin recording] [Castro, in Spanish with passage-by-passage translation into English] [in progress] .....the man leading his country because to reinstate him through that would make him lose his political stature. Aristide must return, as if for the first time, through victorious elections.

[Unidentified reporter] In Cuba, will there be diversity?

[Castro] You are the only one who knows.... [end recording]

Bahamian Prime Minister, Guyanese President on Haitian Crisis

FL0605213494 Castries HTS Caribvision Television in English 1956 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] [Passage indistinct] President Aristide was ousted in a military coup in September 1991 and has been living in the United States ever since. [Words indistinct] an embargo against the Haitian authorities has failed to do little than hurt the people of Haiti, and they are fleeing their native country, flocking to the United States and The Bahamas. In fact, at this moment a session of the high-level segment of the UN global conference, Bahamian Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham spoke of this influx of refugees, saying it is a burden for his country.

[Begin Ingraham recording] The Bahamas could be faced with large numbers of illegal Haitian immigrants who continue to pour into our country, creating excessive demands on our educational, housing, health, and welfare services, creating unregulated pressures on natural resources, including water, demands which we can ill-afford to meet. How can a nation of 280,000 people reasonably be expected to cope with the problems of millions of Haitians? Ill-equipped though we are to meet these demands on resources, The Bahamas is humane in its treatment of Haitian and Cuban shipwrecked persons. [end recording]

Meanwhile, Guyanese President Cheddi Jagan, while not an advocate of military intervention, believes there is no other solution to the Haitian crisis:

[Begin Jagan recording] I know what military occupation from imperialist powers has done to a lot of countries, but we have to look at the dialectics of the whole situation. First, Aristide was overwhelmingly elected by the people. Second, if he is not restored to power, it sends a wrong message to would-be dictators and military upstarts in different parts of the world because there is a movement throughout the world toward democratization and this can be endangered if Aristide is not returned to power. [end recording]

President Clinton has [word indistinct] the support of Ricky Singh, president of the Caribbean Association of Media Workers, a nongovernmental organization accredited to the conference. Mr. Singh says the U.S. threat can be avoided, but he pointed out that (the other way), Caribbean people, and especially journalists, have a moral obligation to [word indistinct] the Haitian people.

[Begin Singh recording] [Word indistinct] have to begin to interact with Haitian counterparts in terms of promoting a better understanding among the Haitian and the people of the rest of the Caribbean. There is a lot of ignorance abroad and a lot of prejudices among non-Haitian Caribbean people because we have [word indistinct] over the years all of the ugly caricatures of the Haitian masses. It is our problem that [word indistinct] ourselves from that process and beginning to relate more pragmatically and sensibly to the problems facing the Haitian masses. [end recording]

So it is now a question of wait and see, to see if the U .S. will indeed send its troops to Haiti and what will be the outcome.

Haiti

Aristide Asks For Renewal of UN/OAS Mandate

FL0605191894 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] Jean-Bertrand Aristide solicits the renewal of the mandate of the civilian mission in Haiti. In a letter addressed to the UN secretary general, the Haitian president-in-exile asked for the renewal of the mandate of the International Civilian Mission in Haiti, according to the terms of reference already negotiated with Dante Caputo.

Referring to a deterioration of human rights and democracy in Haiti, Aristide hoped that the presence of the mission is contributing to an improvement in the human rights situation and helping create a favorable environment for political dialogue in the country.

MNP-28 Accuses Clinton of Violating Sovereignty

FL0605231594 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1600 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] MNP-28 [National Patriotic Movement of 28 November], led by Dejean Belizaire, reacted to the threats of military intervention in Haiti and the total embargo planned against Haiti. Belizaire accuses the U.S. President of violating the national sovereignty of the Republic of Haiti. The former president of the National Assembly condemns the behavior of the international community, which is trying, he says, to impose

a solution from the outside to a crisis that is above all, Haitian. It is up to Haitians to solve the problems of power and of the political regime in Haiti, stated Belizaire on this new twist in the political crisis:

[Begin Belizaire recording] Haiti is an independent, sovereign state, bound through mutual respect to cooperate with the other states in the hemisphere and with the international institutions. But it is up to Haitians and to Haitians alone to solve the problems of power and political regimes in this country. It is desirable under the exceptional circumstances of this crisis, however, that the opposing parties understand that in their search for a durable solution, they must be open to mutual concessions or to pay an unavoidable price.

Second, the institution of democracy in Haiti, as is the case for all countries in the hemisphere, will be the product of the economic, political, and social contradiction game, and of a long process. But it cannot in any way be imposed from the outside. The 19 years of U.S. military occupation, beginning in 1915, only broke the dynamic struggle of the Haitian people for change, and interrupted the country's process of democratization.

Third, a total and complete embargo and military invasion as a means of solving the Haitian crisis is a monumental, gross mistake from which the international community must immediately dissociate in order to safeguard its distinguished image and the future of its relations with the Haitian people and with the authentic political parties, the only ones that are permanent, durable, and unfailingly attached to the fate of the sovereign Republic of Haiti. [end recording]

MRN Leader Ends Silence, Demands Cedras Resign

FL0605202194 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 6 May 94

[Passages within quotation marks in Creole]

[Excerpts] The National Reconstruction Movement [MRN] of Rene Theodore has demanded the resignation of General Raoul Cedras as a way out of the deadlock. MRN leader Rene Theodore, former prospective prime minister, explained in a statement on Signal FM that the departure of Gen. Raoul Cedras is necessary to avoid a military intervention in Port-au-Prince:

[Begin Theodore recording] "Instead of speaking of military intervention, since the Haitian military institution is not hostile toward anyone, the foreign powers should carry out their commitment to bring military cooperation to Haiti to help discipline the Haitian Army, professionalize the officers and noncommissioned officers of the Haitian Army, and establish the police force provided for by the Haitian Constitution. They signed documents to this effect and they must fulfill their obligation." [end recording]

Theodore also calls on the sectors involved in the crisis to work toward a respect for legality and legitimacy. MRN demands the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to avoid the reinforcement of sanctions against the country. Theodore reminds parliamentarians of the difficult crossroads the country is facing:

[Begin Theodore recording] "[Passage omitted] It is very clear to everyone that the resolution of the crisis will begin with the resignation of Gen. Cedras. MRN demands the resignation of Gen. Cedras as the first step toward cancellation of the international community's actions and claims." [end recording]

This was Rene Theodore who has ended his silence, his long silence, to take a stand in favor of the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Rumors: Rightist Government Imminent; Malval Sought

FL0605193894 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 6 May 94

[Excerpts] Rumors indicating that right-wing political leaders are ready to install a new government, challenging the United Nations and U.S. President Bill Clinton, are circulating in the Haitian capital. The British news agency, Reuters, reports that Haitian businessmen are worried that the extreme right is about to install a new de facto government. They report that they [not further identified] have asked for the return of Robert Malval as prime minister, a post he left with disgust last December. They believe that having a legitimate leader in this post could fill the temporal vacuum and reduce the necessity to fill it.

Someone close to Malval refused to confirm or to deny the speculation, stating that any approach might be be considered. I cannot reject that, this official said. Depending on how it is presented, Malval would have to wait and see of what the offer consists. [passage omitted]

Radio Antilles International To Resume Broadcasting

FL0605193794 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 5 May 94

[Excerpt] Radio Antilles International will soon be back on the air, station director Jacques Sampeur said on Signal FM on 14 May. The financial reserves of the station, however, are not sufficient to cover the repair fees, he added, so a lottery has been organized to help the administration with its undertakings.

Sampeur notes that at one time, the UN Development Program [PNUD] had drawn up a list [not further identified] to help the station, but this was destroyed in the crush of the 30 September 1991 events. He nevertheless pointed out that this help will need to be extended. [passage omitted]

Police Sent to Chiapas Over Presence of Armed Men

PA0705010694 Paris AFP in Spanish 2326 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] Tuxtla Gutierrez, Mexico, 6 May (AFP)—Justice Prosecutor General Arturo Becerra has reported the Chiapas Justice Prosecutor's Office has dispatched 60 policemen to the village of Bochil, where the presence of 300 armed men was reported several days ago.

Another group of policemen is already working in the region trying to determine the whereabouts of two inmates who on the morning of 4 May were broken out of prison by the group of armed men, who had their faces painted black and covered with kerchiefs.

According to Becerra, armed individuals with their faces covered, allegedly planning to release other prison inmates, have been seen near Bochil, a town of approximately 15,000 residents located some 150 km north of Tuxtla Gutierrez. The two prison inmates were serving time for rustling.

The Zapatist National Liberation Movement started an armed uprising in this state on 1 January, suspended military actions, and is presently holding peace talks with the federal government.

Camacho Solis, Ruiz Update Talks With EZLN

PA0705202594 Mexico City Radio ACIR Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 6 May 94

[Report by Juan Santoyo from Chiapas for the "ACIR Radio News" newscast—live]

[Excerpt] [Announcer] Manuel Camacho Solis, commissioner for peace and reconciliation in Chiapas; Samuel Ruiz, bishop of San Cristobal de las Casas; and members of the EZLN [Zapatist National Liberation Army] general staff issued a joint communique stating that consultations with the EZLN rank and file are continuing in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, the results of which will be disclosed in coming days. Here is Juan Santoyo with a report:

[Santoyo] Good afternoon. No major announcements followed the second meeting with Peace Commissioner Manuel Camacho Solis, mediator Samuel Ruiz, and the 10 members of the EZLN general staff. The parties merely pledged that they will make new contacts in upcoming weeks and that the EZLN will, in the coming days, comply with the 36 points agreed upon in San Cristobal de las Casas. At the meeting held in nearby Guadalupe Tepeyac, Monsignor Ruiz said the EZLN has resumed consultations for peace negotiations. Msgr. Ruiz also expressed concern over recent events that at any moment could hinder the peace process. He emphasized, however, that major difficulties have been overcome and current conditions are very different. Ruiz also referred to Camacho Solis' statements during the meeting with the EZLN.

[Begin Ruiz recording] Peace Commissioner Camacho Solis referred to progress in the EZLN's compliance with the San Cristobal commitments. He said the conditions are right for prompt compliance with those commitments. The key issue at hand, he added, is peace negotiations in Chiapas that restore tranquillity nationwide. The parties agreed to maintain contact in the coming weeks. [end recording]

[Santoyo] Following these comments on Camacho's meeting with the EZLN, Ruiz reiterated that the parties have agreed to meet again but gave no specific date. Camacho Solis, who was also asked about the meeting, said it took place at a location chosen by the EZLN near Guadalupe Tepeyac and that it lasted over six hours.

[Begin Camacho recording] The meeting was attended by 10 representatives of the EZLN, and they also kept the area under very tight surveillance. Before the meeting, EZLN followers and ordinary citizens demonstrated to voice their views and political demands. Subcommander Marcos also attended the meeting. [end recording]

[Santoyo] Reports added that some residents of San Cristobal de las Casas, who were listening to Camacho Solis and Msgr. Ruiz, were somewhat disappointed because they thought more concrete agreements had been reached. Many residents expected to hear that a specific date had been set to sign a peace agreement.

[Announcer] Although no specific dates were set, this meeting with the EZLN in the Lacandon jungle was significant. For one thing, Camacho Solis stated that this consultation process among all the EZLN members in the area may set the stage for another meeting and a continuation of the peace dialogue. This opportunity is likely to arise once EZLN discussions on proposals and counterproposals to petitions made in the first phase of the peace talks conclude.

[Santoyo] Yes, those are the prospects, but we must also raise a point made by the EZLN members themselves. It is true that they have currently resumed their consultations, but they are also asking the entire country, including all peasant and social organizations, to conduct surveys on the 36 points agreed upon in San Cristobal de las Casas. The EZLN seeks to include those surveys in the second phase of the peace dialogue and use them to draft their response to the 36-point San Cristobal agreement. Many observers are following this situation very closely, basically because it constitutes an effort by the EZLN to make their internal consultations a national matter, which could cause some delay.

The EZLN is expected to give a definitive answer to the 36 points in the coming days—whether it agrees or disagrees—and at that juncture set a date for the second phase. In addition, rumors have mushroomed here in San Cristobal since Msgr. Ruiz revealed a few days ago that he had plans to travel to Rome. When asked about this trip, his closest associates said they were awaiting a definitive answer following the meeting with the EZLN

to know whether Msgr. Ruiz will leave tomorrow for Rome to meet with top leaders of the Catholic Church as well as to discuss the Chiapas situation. Msgr. Ruiz' trip to Rome has not been confirmed yet, but rumors are strong. Some say Msgr. Ruiz might return from Rome in 15 days when an answer is likely to be ready and the date for a second talk set. [passage omitted]

New EC Subpanel To Review Market Access

PA0705023794 Mexico City EL FINANCIERO in Spanish 2 May 94 p 28

[Text] The 11th meeting of the Joint Mexican-EC Commission, held 28-29 April, agreed to establish a commercial subpanel that will review, among other topics, obstacles to bilateral relations—specifically, bilateral market access issues—and will explore formulas to enhance unity.

The Commerce and Industrial Development Secretariat issued a communique announcing the creation of the subpanel. The communique added that in his speech in Brussels, Herminio Blanco Mendoza, under secretary for international trade negotiations, assessed President Carlos Salinas de Gortari's economic and social policy, which seeks to improve the distribution of income and combat extreme poverty.

During this meeting, Blanco Mendoza stressed the need to create jobs and raise the competitiveness of Mexico's productive sector. He said the government's efforts in these areas have gotten under way through the utilization of four complementary strategies. These strategies are: achieving macroeconomic stability; consolidating trade opening; deregulating various sectors of the economy; and expanding bilateral, subregional, and multilateral negotiations to open and reinforce markets.

Foreign Under Secretary Antonio de Icaza, in turn, noted that new circumstances were affecting Mexico and the world, and he stressed that Mexico was undergoing a deep-rooted transformation to adapt to the new situation. In this regard, it should be stressed that Mexico, besides being a founder of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, has joined the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum and will soon join the OECD. In addition, NAFTA will provide Mexico with the means to consolidate structural changes and to achieve an efficient incorporation into the world economy.

In discussing the nation's recent evolution, De Icaza highlighted the national political agreement reached a short time ago and the different electoral reforms and other pacts that consolidate democracy and strengthen its institutions.

Juan Prat, general director in charge of North-South relations, noted that greater emphasis on economic cooperation constitutes a solution to the new situation in Latin America by encouraging activities of mutual interest that will reinforce regional reform.

Officials Cited on Purchase of Riot Gear

PA0805132294 Mexico City LA JORNADA in Spanish 6 May 94 p 3

[Report on interview with Foreign Relations Secretary Manuel Tello and Navy Secretary Luis Carlos Ruano Angulo by reporters Elena Gallegos and Emilio Lomas; at El Zocalo on 5 May]

[Excerpts] Foreign Relations Secretary Manuel Tello and Navy Secretary Luis Carlos Ruano Angulo have seen "nothing odd" in the Mexican Government's purchase of riot gear. Tello, however, admitted that the purchase could be viewed as untimely "because society is very sensitive about it; it has exaggerated the issue."

The two officials spoke with reporters briefly at El Zocalo, following the ceremony to mark the 132d anniversary of the Battle of Puebla. [passage omitted]

[Gallegos] What do you think about the purchase of riot gear?

[Ruano] I see nothing wrong with this. It is not unusual.

[Lomas] How much equipment does the Navy purchase annually?

[Ruano] I have no idea. Do you know who can tell you? A high-ranking officer, like Admiral Perez Elias.

[Gallegos] What do you think of the presence of U.S. military personnel at the border?

[Ruano] Which border? Ours or theirs? If it is their border, it is their territory; should they be in Chihuahua or Coahuila, it would be wrong.

[Gallegos] Is this a provocation?

[Ruano] No, it is not. Am I provoking you when I am hammering a nail inside my home? I think not, but anyway...

[Gallegos, interrupting] Are they harassing us?

[Ruano] They have no need to harass us. You know that. There are many ways to harass.... Well, there is something we must take into account: By allowing illegal aliens to cross the border, we are causing trouble for them. Of course I agree with my fellow countrymen, but they (the Americans) have their own problems. Therefore, I believe the presence along the border is not affecting us.

Foreign Secretary Manuel Tello said in other countries, like France—where he served as ambassador—it is common to purchase riot gear. He insisted that society is very touchy today, and, in turn, people have exaggerated this issue.

PGR Decides Against Prosecuting SARH Secretary

PA0905034494 Mexico LA JORNADA in Spanish 6 May 94 p 53

[Report by Lourdes Edith Rudino]

[Text] The Prosecutor General's Office (PGR) has decided not to take legal action against Agriculture and Hydraulic Resources (SARH) Secretary Carlos Hank Gonzalez and his private secretary Juan Carlos Gomez Aranda because there is no evidence of the crimes alleged by the National Action Party (PAN) a few days ago.

Last night, Gonzalez himself reported that the charges against him are baseless because the only evidence offered by PAN was a photocopy of what is supposed to be a card belonging to Gomez Aranda. He said, however, that the document is only a blurred copy, which is no evidence whatsoever.

Gonzalez had previously been supported by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) through Fernando Ortiz Aranda, president of the National Executive Committee, who said there was no evidence that he had misused SARH funds or equipment to support PRI presidential candidate Ernesto Zedillo. The PRI leader referred to the charges against the SARH secretary as "an action seeking political sensationalism for electoral purposes."

The PGR said that, according to preliminary investigation No. 2979/94, lodged at table 45 of the Special Prosecutor's Office for Crimes Committed by Public Servants [Fiscalia Especial de Delitos Cometidos por Servidores Publicos] and filed as case No. 41/II/94, the Federal Attorney General's Office decided that there is no basis to the charges other than PAN's accusations, which makes the case "weak and unsubstantiated."

At a news conference, Gonzalez said Gomez Aranda did, in fact, work in support of Zedillo's candidacy, but did so outside his eight hours of SARH work and that the supplies were from Gomez Aranda's private office where certain communications originated. He said the report was simply an instrument to try to belittle "some people, basically me, and to see whether the embarrassment would generate a conflict within the PRI." Gonzales added that attempts were made to divide the party, but "they did not manage to and will not be able to."

Gonzalez explained that the funds used to pay for the pro-Zedillo advertisement that appeared in 10 Mexico City newspapers were from his personal funds and funds from five other persons, whom he did not wish to identify and who, as a group of friends, decided to invite 51 other persons to sign the advertisement.

Gonzalez said he had handed over as evidence in his defense a copy of check No. 222 from his personal account at the National Bank of Mexico (Banamex) for 236,144 pesos made out to Ferrer Publicity, the firm that contracted the advertisement.

He said he is not interested in countersuing the PAN, because "I do not like wasting time." He emphasized the difference between his role as a private citizen and his work as a public official, which does not prevent him from lending political support. Gonzalez added he will continue to support his party and candidate all his life. Even though the news conference lasted only 20 minutes, Gonzalez appeared nervous with reporters' questions.

El Salvador

Commentary: U.S. Invasion of Haiti Would Be Mistake

PA0705214194 San Salvador Radio Cadena Sonora in Spanish 1730 GMT 7 May 94

[Unattributed station commentary]

[Text] A U.S. invasion of Haiti would be a gross mistake. U.S. President Bill Clinton's latest threats to invade Haiti to dislodge the military somewhat contradict the modern dictum of respect for others. The Haitian military continues to control power and prevent constitutional President Jean-Bertrand Aristide from returning home. The events in Iraq, then Panama, and now Haiti clearly demonstrate the United States has become the international police force that tightens the reins of anyone who steps out of line.

The case of Panama was very denigrating and offensive to the dignity of the Latin American nations. The invasion of Panama City by forces stationed in the Canal Zone destroyed the humble buildings of many poor neighborhoods and ended the lives of many Panamanians. The wounded and disabled survivors, who still suffer the traumas of the massive attacks by U.S. gunships, continue their plight from door to door demanding a modest compensation that would allow them to continue surviving and rebuild their poor huts, which U.S. artillery flattened.

The same could occur in Haiti; this is very disturbing, because thousands of Haitians will lose their lives, huts, and belongings if an invasion of the island does in fact occur. We do not know, however, what kind of reaction to expect from an angered people as patriotic as the Haitians. We believe a U.S. invasion of Haiti would not be the picnic Panama was. The Haitians will set a high price to their defeat. It will undoubtedly be a massacre that will in no way benefit the image of the powerful nation of the north. That does not matter. Clinton has already said: The Haitian military can vary this situation today if they wish; otherwise, they must face the consequences. The Haitian military must understand the grave nature of this decision and try and find a negotiated way out, while saving face and avoiding any signs of surrender.

The Haitian people do not deserve to be massacred. They have already suffered so much that there are no more tears left to cry; this means nothing to Clinton. He wants to restore democracy by fire and force, because they are the world's policemen, and they say God gave them that power. Meanwhile, all the other Latin American Nations, in their roles as observers, have simply said go right ahead.

Cristiani on Death Threats Against Leftist Leaders

PA0805191694 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 7 May 94

[Report by Mario Jovel from the "Up-to-Date" newscast]

[Text] President Alfredo Cristiani today criticized death threats by a clandestine group against leftist leaders after noting that this attitude shows the lack of ability of certain Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] sectors to join the democratic system. Cristiani said the self-styled Salvadoran Revolutionary Front will be investigated and those responsible for the threats will be brought to justice.

According to President Cristiani, the FMLN's internal problems do not have to adversely affect the country's stability because it is a matter of differences within a political party. According to the president, the FMLN should divide itself once and for all into two parties to end the problem.

[Begin Cristiani recording] If there really are people within the FMLN that are solving these types of problems with violence, they are demonstrating their lack of ability to join a democratic process and their lack of tolerance for differences of opinion. [end recording]

In addition, the head of state said labor code reforms created a tripartite commission that will work as an entity to advise the Labor Ministry. According to Cristiani, what remains to be done is to decide if the Forum for Economic and Social Consensus will continue as it is or if discussions will be incorporated at the Labor Council, which has been given a permanent mandate.

[Begin Cristiani recording] Now that this council has been reactivated, we hope it can become a permanent council so that talks can be held here. I believe, however, that the decision will have to be made at the Forum for Concerted Effort. [end recording]

Cristiani also confirmed that an energy plan has been proposed to the Honduran Government, which is currently facing an electricity crisis. The president said this will not adversely affect the country and there will be no rationing. The proposal consists of an interconnection with Honduras because Honduras is the only country in the region that does not have an energy interconnection with El Salvador. It also includes the construction by both countries of El Tigre Hydroelectric Dam. The El Tigre Dam, with the waters of the Torola and Lempa Rivers, would increase the production of electricity by 150 megawatts for each country. El Salvador's three dams together produce 500 megawatts.

FMLN Deputies Reject FRS Death Threats

PA0805231594 San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 7 May 94 p 11

[Text] Joaquin Villalobos and deputies Guadalupe Martinez and Eduardo Sancho, members of the People's

Revitalizing Expression [ERP] and National Resistance [RN] factions of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN], yesterday downplayed the alleged death threats issued by a ghost group.

The threats were made on Thursday night through a communique signed by the Salvadoran Revolutionary Front [FRS] and read on several radio stations. In the communique the FRS threatened to kill Villalobos, Martincz, and Sancho, whom it accuses of being "traitors to the revolution and to the spirit of the peace agreements."

According to the report, these leaders disregarded directives issued by the FMLN Directorate, resulting in division within the ranks of the former guerrilla organization. Martinez and Sancho accepted seats in the Salvadoran National Assembly Directorate, and five other deputies supported the candidacy of current Assembly President Gloria Salguero Gross. This decision created heated friction between 21 colleagues who won seats in the Assembly.

"I do not worry about anonymous threats; they are the result of the opportunity created by discrepancies within the FMLN," Villalobos said. The former guerrilla fighter denied that the charges are sponsored by members of parties that are annoyed with the RN and the ERP—the Communist Party of El Salvador (PCES), the Farabundo Marti People's Liberation Forces (FPL), and the Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers (PRTC).

Nevertheless, he accused these groups of having discussions with the left in a "fanatical" way that may provoke violent actions. Villalobos, leader of what is now considered the social democratic current in the FMLN, stated that the communique might be the work of extremist left- or right-wing groups that "disagree with the debate currently under way." Villalobos issued an appeal to leading FMLN groups, urging them to stop signing newspaper communiques that predict expulsions and sanctions characterized by what he termed "fanatical attitudes."

Meanwhile, Deputies Ana Guadalupe Martinez and Eduardo Sancho said they are not afraid of their former comrades in arms and they consider the threats to be part of a psychological campaign launched by radical left- or right-wing groups.

Martinez considers an assassination at this point to be out of the democratic context that prevails in the country, saying: "I hope only a small group wrote the communique and published it in the media. If an assassination occurs, we would be returning to the past."

Referring to this, Legislative Assembly President Gloria Salguero Gross asked the FMLN to unite, work in harmony, and legislate in favor of the people. The deputy asked the people who sent the communique to "reflect," because "violence is no longer an option."

A similar statement was issued by Deputy Gerardo Suvillaga, who condemned the manifesto from the self-styled FRS, and he asked the FMLN to settle its disputes. Meanwhile, Defense Minister Humberto Corado said the anonymous communiques are not consistent with the new political reality, because "there are opportunities for any tendency to publicly state its position."

FMLN Deputies Issue Communique on Schism

PA0605195294 San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 5 May 94 p 101

["Press Communique" issued by the Political Commission and Deputies of the Peoples Revitalizing Expression and the National Resistance of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front in El Salvador; date not given]

[Text] The deputies and members of the Political Commission of the FMLN, on behalf of the National Resistance, RN, and the Peoples Revitalizing Expression, ERP, hereby make it known that:

1. We regret the emotional reactions of FMLN comrades over the fact that a group of FMLN deputies exercised its legal right to nominate and be nominated for positions on the Legislative Assembly's Board of Directors.

2. It concerns us that offensive and fallacious attitudes are being fostered in the internal debate. There is talk of expulsions or punishment, impossible to apply to something that is legal and normal for any democratic party in the world. This attitude projects an image of the FMLN as an authoritarian party.

3. We appeal to the FPL [Popular Liberation Forces], the PC [Communist Party of El Salvador], and the PRTC [Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers] to remain calm and to seriously pursue a new internal agreement. This agreement should define the terms of the alliance between the two tendencies that throughout the FMLN's history have existed and that have had innumerable differences. The war is over. None of the currents can any longer be a political prisoner for attempting to maintain the image of a united party that has never really existed. The political identity of each tendency is as important as our alliance in facing the right wing.

4. We hereby suggest that there be a mature debate of the main points that differentiate us, such as the true or apparent acceptance of a market economy and private property, the struggle inside the system or control of the system, the validity or invalidity of Marxist-Leninist precepts, the acceptance that we are living a new reality in a developing democratic process while defending the challenging and confrontational manner of speech or political style.

5. We believe that the parliament's work is a matter of dialogue, negotiations, and agreements among political parties. This is why deputies are elected. This is why we

never considered as negative the search for understanding that comrades in the FPL, PC, and the PRTC undertook with ARENA [Nationalist Republican Alliance] with regard to holding positions on the Board of Directors. We want to point out to you that it was a political error not to make proposals on the day established for this. Because of this, you projected an image of rejecting the system that was not positive while you lost the opportunity for the plenum to chose you. We always made it known to you that we would nominate candidates if we did not reach consensus on this point and if the majority tried to impose nominations on us. We have not acted behind anyone's back nor was there any need to reach agreement with anyone. We only nominated candidates according to the deadline, setting aside for subsequent discussion the problems of the Assembly's internal rules.

6. The RN and the ERP reconfirm their support for the left wing's renovation and modernization in keeping with the new realities of peace, thus effectively defending the popular interest. We reject challenging and anti-system attitudes that seek to soothe the ideologically conscious but that do not produce specific results for the people, while projecting a war-mongering and conflictive image that alienates the support of the vast majority. We favor strengthening our credibility as a political party that is satisfied with the rules of the game and that accepts and respects its adversaries. In this way its coming to power does not constitute a threat to any sector of Salvadoran society.

[signed] ERP and RN Political Commission and Deputies

FMLN's Villalobos on Differences Within Party

PA0605180194 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish 1800 GMT 4 May 94

[From the "YSU Radio News" newscast]

[Text] Eduardo Sancho and the rest of the ERP [Peoples Revitalizing Expression] and National Resistance deputies in the Assembly expressed their opinions on the other parties that still make up the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front), saying they are not political or mature.

[Begin Joaquin Villalobos, ERP secretary general, recording] The image of the FMLN that emerges is troublesome, because it depicts us as authoritarian, as calling attention to a deputy who dares to vote differently from the majority. Just imagine what would happen if in the United States the Republicans and the Democrats who always vote together were told that they would be thrown out of the party. Or say this were to happen in France or Austria or any civilized country.

We call on our companeros in the leadership of other organizations to reinitiate discussions to try and devise a new internal agreement that defines the terms of the FMLN alliance. There have always been differences in the FMLN. There are two persuasions. During the war the differences were not as obvious because we had to be united. Once the war ended and things opened up at the parliamentary level, we no longer had to accept circumstances where they could impose a majority or minority by three to two. Then differences became more noticeable.

It's no big deal; it's just democracy. That's what's happening. We think that political identity is as important as maintaining the alliance within the front. We think discussions should be held within the FMLN on the issues on which we differ, for example the apparent versus the genuine acceptance of the market economy and private property, the position on the existence of the Armed Forces, and the validity or invalidity of Marxism-Leninism, all of which are basic topics on which we have differences, not on other things.

It's as if it's a sin if there are talks with ARENA [Nationalist Republican Alliance] or if someone from ARENA votes for the FMLN or if someone in the FMLN votes for ARENA. That's illogical. Whoever cannot understand this should go back to the mountains. [end recording]

For his part, Eduardo Sancho said that at this time there cannot be two positions, noting that the party's political line needs to be defined because people want the country to be democratized and want the peace agreements to be fulfilled.

Both men described as irrational the possibility that the party might expel some members.

[Begin Villalobos recording] We do concede that this is an emotional issue. It isn't politically or legally rational. There is no basis for it. I think the problem is that it's difficult for fellow party members to accept the situation.

We took a historic step on Sunday. We sent an important signal to the majority of the people in this country. We are not happy with the changes in this country. They didn't want to accept that. This is the main point. What impact will this have on our international relationships with democratic parties that are used to these kinds of things?

One of these days we will see some FMLN member penalized because he voted differently. But this the most normal thing in the world. This is impossible, both politically or legally. There is no basis for this in the statutes.

We will not leave the FMLN just because we favor modernizing the left. We are the FMLN. We are not intellectuals. We did not study Marxism in Costa Rica. We went to the front to work. We learned in prison. We survived difficult situations 17 times. We are all full-fledged members of the FMLN. We each have an I.D. and a historical identity. We who fought on the streets will now fight politically. We are proud of our past. In the name of the FMLN, I participated in the historic meeting. It was I who proposed this banner and this

name. Eduardo and I made the most important proposals in the negotiations. You are familiar with the military strategy and know what everyone says about where it originated. [end recording]

Honduras

Defense Minister Views Voluntary Draft

PA0805221394 Tegucigalpa EL PERIODICO DE HONDURAS in Spanish 6 May 94 p 39

[Text] Tegucigalpa—General Reynaldo Andino Flores, defense and public security minister, has said the Armed Forces are permanent despite the adoption of the voluntary draft. He has said: "We are accustomed to obeying," and he added this decision will have many benefits, because it conciliates the Honduran family.

He has also said this is what the people have wanted. The government and Congress have approved it unanimously; therefore, the military organization expresses solidarity with this new arrangement.

Andino has said the reduction in the number of military personnel is the responsibility of Congress, which has the power to do so, but he added the military institution could recommend a specific number, "because we are supposed to know the Army's needs."

As for the Armed Forces' future, Andino has said the future will be brighter, because if the voluntary draft is good for Honduras, it is also good for them.

Andino has said approval of the voluntary draft shows once more that "political power has always been above military power."

Armed Forces Commander Views Issue

PA0805132094 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1145 GMT 5 May 94

["Exclusive" interview with General Luis Alonso Discua Elvir, commander of the Honduran Armed Forces, by Danilo Izaguirre; place and date not given; from the "Morning Paper" newscast—recorded]

[Text] [Izaguirre] We are talking with General Discua on Congress' most recent decision to turn the obligatory military service into a voluntary one. What is the Army commander's position?

[Discua] In the name of the Honduran people, I would like to congratulate the deputies, our people's representatives, for a decision yesterday befitting of the Honduran people, including the Armed Forces. A political decision has been made on this issue. We have always criticized the methods used in recruitment, because we regarded it as wrong. At that time we did not have the political decision President Reina made now to work on this aspect. I think his decision is right. The Honduran people have duties to perform. Now there is a political willingness to be carried out.

[Izaguirre] Do you people believe this decision is one made by the Armed Forces commander in chief, the president of the Republic, rather than by the Armed Forces as an institution?

[Discua] Correct. The Armed Forces are a nondeliberating body and as such obey the decisions made by the commander in chief, the president of the Republic. This position again establishes the fact we are a permanent, national institution; we are not a temporary institution. We are one of the columns of this country's democracy. At no time have the Armed Forces lent themselves to the promotion of internal disorder. We support the democratic system, just as we did during the past elections, and keep supporting it. The institution is permanent.

[Izaguirre] Does this mean no person or institution knocking on the Armed Forces' doors can possibly use them for personal or group gain because the Armed Forces have already defined their position on the role of the Armed Forces?

[Discua] The Armed Forces' new role has been clearly defined. Armed institutions in Latin America play a fundamental role on which the people's will rests entirely. This will is expressed in the free election of officials to govern the country in a democratic system. The Armed Forces will always stay alert. No individuals or groups will ever be able to thwart the role the Armed Forces play in the state. The Armed Forces are born with the mandate to defend the state's sovereignty and the people's rights and preserve internal order; this is the Armed Forces' clear and fundamental role. We have assumed another great responsibility, which we already had, according to the Constitution, concerning education.

[Izaguirre] I talked with General Humberto Regalado, who held the same post as you. I would like you to discuss the people's reports that the Army's recruitment is brutal. How are recruits treated?

[Discua] An armed institution must have soldiers that have a definite conviction. They must have an esprit de corps and a physical condition fit to deal with any situation that might arise. The Armed Forces have been trained to defend the country and preserve internal order. There is something taken for granted in the Armed Forces: discipline, loyalty, and respect, all of which must be strengthened. Character is formed by (?strict) discipline, such as the one we maintain. Recruitment in the past had some defects, because there was no political willingness. We now have a considerably updated and modern military service law. This law clearly defines how recruitment must be handled; unfortunately, there was never a political willingness to enforce the law.

[Izaguirre] There was a lack not only of political willingness but of a desire to obey the law. I understand that the state must advise the Armed Forces of those who must render military service.

[Discua] Correct. Serving in the Armed Forces is a duty clearly defined in Article 40 of the Constitution. To

render military service is a citizen's duty. Details are now being clarified, but we had already typified them in the Military Service Law, which describes those who must render this service and the way this service must be rendered. Congress has now made the courageous decision of amending a Constitution article under the president's initiative. I think we are on the right track.

[Izaguirre] There is general concern among the people, and you are the person who can explain the truth to the Honduran people. This is their concern: What will happen in this transition period—that is to say, the time that will pass before the amendment to Article 276 of the Constitution is goes into force? How will recruitment be conducted between now and the time the decree goes into effect?

[Discua] First, the Military Service Law is in effect. It is true that the reform has been approved, but it must be ratified by the second legislature. Therefore, the Military Service Law is in force. According to this law, it is the responsibility of the executive—namely, the commander in chief of the Armed Forces—to fill the vacancies in the Armed Forces.

[Izaguirre] Some people also say that this temporal gap will be used by the Armed Forces to forcefully recruit personnel. Are the Armed Forces planning to carry out forceful recruitment during this time?

[Discua] No, but there exists a constitutional duty to recruit, according to Article 40. In addition, the Military Service Law is in force. There are many procedures. I do not have a copy of the law with me at this moment, but the Military Service Law is clearly established and it remains in force.

There are drafts and boards. There is the Military Enlistment Board, comprising the government minister and the Armed Forces commander or his delegate. There are also departmental boards, governors, and regional chiefs. We also have mayors. We will issue draft documents to the approximately 1.2 million citizens who, according to the Constitution, have a duty to serve in the military. Of this 1.2 million, less than 1 percent will be recruited into military units, whose sleeping quarters, diners, and schools have been improved. The Constitution establishes this service as a citizen's duty.

[Izaguirre] When this proposal was presented, were the Armed Forces consulted on the economic repercussions of the proposal? It is one of the important factors in this issue. To make military service educational, voluntary, humanistic, and so on, money is necessary. According to the president, military service must be made attractive. Has this been discussed? Is the country prepared for this?

[Discua] The president of the Republic has been adequately clear on this situation. I think he has a clear, well-defined answer. We have a new role in education. Rather, we already had this role, but now it has been defined. We must contribute to education in the country. I want to tell you something, Danilo: We have always had secondary schools, trade schools, and primary schools. I want to make something clear once and for all. Adult Hondurans dislike attending school or studying. When we have recruits in our units, we must force them to attend secondary schools and primary schools. These recruits, however, do everything imaginable to avoid going to school. We see the results of this in the number of dropouts in primary and secondary schools.

Nicaragua

Offensive Against 'Criminal' Bands Begins

PA0705164594 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0641 GMT 7 May 94

[Report by Filadelfo Martinez]

[Text] Managua, 7 May (EFE)—The Nicaraguan Government closed the chapter on negotiations with armed groups and this weekend sent a combined military force backed by aerial units to pursue "bands of criminals" responsible for robbery, cattle rustling, kidnapping, and rape.

Government Minister Alfredo Mendieta and Major General Joaquin Cuadra Lacayo, chief of the Sandinist People's Army general staff, met late this week to implement a joint Armed Forces-National Police plan to stamp out violence in rural areas. Soviet-made MI-17 helicopters are being used to transport troops and logistical supplies and to observe the movement of armed groups in the mountains in the country's central and northern regions in this operation against "bands of armed delinquents."

"The important thing in this case is the will of the Nicaraguan state to eliminate this cancer ("armed groups")," army spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Ricardo Wheelock told the local press.

Deputy Government Minister Joaquin Lovo stressed that with the 15 April disbandment of some 600 armed men who were led for two years by Jose Angel Talavera, alias El Chacal, the government closed the chapter on talks and negotiations to get the rebels to lay down their weapons.

According to this official, close to 500 of these men are involved in such actions "part time," since they spend some days working the land and other days breaking the law.

Lovo said the civilian population, chiefly farmers and peasants, "feels imprisoned by these bands," which operate near El Tuma-La Dalia, Pantasma-Muy Muy, Pantasma-Quilali, and Muelle de los Bueyes and use the names of various organizations for their criminal activities.

"This is no longer a matter of (rearmed) groups making socioeconomic and political demands but of strictly criminal bands, and we are hitting them," he noted.

Although a large-scale military offensive is under way, Lovo affirmed the idea is not to "exterminate" the groups but to capture their members for trial. That is why he asked the Supreme Court of Justice to send "auxiliary judges" to the north.

The deputy minister noted that Ciriaco Palacios, alias Charrito, who is heading one of the most belligerent bands, was given a job in the Special Disarmament Brigades (BED) with a salary of $500 following his surrender last year.

Instead of helping disarm civilians carrying war weapons, Charrito murdered a BED chief and stole a lot of rifles, according to the official.

Lovo said BED officials tried unsuccessfully to talk with Charrito on six occasions, so the authorities will not agree to meet with him now.

Charrito continues to seek a meeting with members of Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo's verification commission to present his conditions for surrender.

The former 3-80 Northern Front forces headed by El Chacal have organized an agricultural and livestock cooperative devoted to harvesting coffee and basic grains and raising cattle on over 3,000 hectares in the north. A state bank granted these former rebels a $1 million loan to acquire the land. They have several years to repay the loan.

El Chacal voiced his concern over the lack of an agreement between the Government Ministry and the National Police for 500 former recontras to take over police precincts in 13 northern municipalities, in accordance with the agreements signed with the government.

Recontras Threaten Cardinal Obando, Esteli Bishop

PA0705203094 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1824 GMT 7 May 94

[Text] Managua, 7 May (DPA)—Charrito [Ciriaco Palacios] and Northiel [Wilfredo Gutierrez or Wilfredo Chavarria], two recontra leaders, have made death threats against Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, Esteli Bishop Monsignor Juan Abelardo Mata, and parish priest Octaviano Rodriguez, Managua's morning newspaper LA TRIBUNA reported today.

According to the publication, the religious leaders were threatened because they favor the disarmament of the group of former rebels organized in the 3-80 Northern Front, which surrendered its weapons and returned to civilian society.

The bishop of Esteli, a city located more than 100 km north of Managua, said the armed groups "have been telling the peasants they are going to kill us because we helped El Chacal (Jose Angel Talavera, who was the leader of the 3-80 Northern Front) to demobilize."

The armed groups are being pursued by Army and police troops following an order by Nicaraguan President Violeta Chamorro to eradicate the armed gangs that have committed murders, robberies, and kidnappings.

Esteli Bishop Mata received death threats last year from the pro-Sandinist Peasant-Worker Revolutionary Front (FROC).

Institute Study Reveals Perception of FSLN

PA0705011094 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 5 May 94 pp 1, 10

[Article by Noel Irias]

[Text] The majority of Sandinists interviewed by the Nicaraguan Studies Institute (IEN) believe that caudillismo exists within the FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front] and that the party has lost the support of part of its rank and file, according to a study entitled "The FSLN: A Study of Its Dynamics and Outlooks Based on the Opinion of the Rank and File."

The study is based on 191 in-depth interviews with FSLN militants and sympathizers in neighborhoods across the country. IEN Director Rodolfo Delgado reports participants were selected from lists provided by the FSLN Leadership Committees in each department.

The study's introduction reveals that, despite the loss of credibility, the FSLN has maintained a solid social base of approximately 23 percent of the population.

The document claims, however, this social base is not broad enough to win the elections in 1996, much less when the support is a mere 12 percent among the peasants and barely 8 percent among the majority of the uneducated poor.

According to the IEN's final report, 55 percent of those interviewed believe caudillismo exists within the FSLN. To them the term caudillismo means "a perpetuation of power that prevents the natural evolution of historical change." Forty-one percent of those interviewed believe that phenomenon does not exist within the FSLN.

Thirty-seven percent of those who believe caudillismo exists within the FSLN "see the danger of succumbing to a lifelong leadership."

"They believe caudillismo affects the image of the democratization of the FSLN, pointing out there should be more than one leader. The leadership should be broad and diverse at every level," the study states.

According to the study, there is agreement on the advisability of having the FSLN secretary general elected by the national convention from a list of candidates provided by members of the rank and file.

"They believe almost unanimously it would be advisable to elect the FSLN secretary general from two or more

candidates. That would send a meaningful, democratic signal to the party and to the Nicaraguan people," the IEN report states.

Among the most disturbing aspects of the study is that 56 percent of those interviewed believe the FSLN has lost popular support due to the crisis the party is experiencing, its neglect of the rank and file and the countryside, and the incorrect methods of struggle used, among other things.

Regarding the different political currents within the FSLN, the majority, 54 percent, believe these currents are hindering the FSLN's progress, and 44 percent believe they are the result of "a struggle for power."

Fifty-eight percent of those interviewed say they have no preference for any current, because they are interested in the FSLN's unity and principles, while "16 percent favor the Democratic Left, and 5 percent favor the Renovating Current."

The IEN questionnaire included the question: "Do you believe the FSLN has been involved in violent acts in the past three years?" Fifty-one percent answered "not as a political party, though some of its members have participated in violent acts."

Those interviewed believe "even though the government initiates institutionalized violence with its neoliberal policies, the FSLN cannot and should not respond with violent demands or protests that can lead to tragic events that affect the image" of the party.

The IEN study will be presented on 6 May at the Olof Palme Convention Center. Among those expected to attend the presentation are Mario Solorzano, Socialist International vice president, Daniel Ortega, Sergio Ramirez, Carlos Fernando Chamorro, Victor Hugo Tinoco, Orlando Nunez, and Oscar Rene Vargas.

Cuadra: Change of EPS Command To 'Take Time'

PA0705042894 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 6 May 94 pp 1, 10

[Report by Jorge Kalin]

[Text] The change of command in the Sandinist People's Army (EPS) "will take time, perhaps months," Major General Joaquin Cuadra Lacayo, General Humberto Ortega Saavedra's virtual replacement, said yesterday.

Maj. Gen. Cuadra yesterday represented the EPS at an official function the National Assembly held in honor of Taiwanese President Li Teng-hui. Cuadra was accompanied at all times by Lieutenant Colonel Ricardo Wheelock, Armed Forces public relations chief.

Days earlier, Wheelock also accompanied Cuadra when he held a news conference in Matagalpa to discuss military operations against criminal groups. Since then, the EPS chief of staff has been seen more frequently in public. According to the command roster, he is Gen. Ortega's virtual successor.

"In all armies there is a transition period in which the chief of a unit must turn over everything in order," Cuadra insisted.

We then asked the high-ranking EPS officer: "In the case of the Army, how long will this process take?" He responded: "It will be a prudent period of time, which will be very clear under the law... but do not worry, because you will learn about it in coming days."

Regarding the honors that Gen. Ortega might receive after he retires, Cuadra said this is not included in the Military Organization Law. Nevertheless, he said, "Gen. Ortega has made many contributions to the country and will continue to do so. Therefore he deserves society's recognition."

Lacayo: No More Tensions

Meanwhile, Presidency Minister Antonio Lacayo admitted that with the recent agreement between the Army and the executive and legislative branches on the Military Code and the Army chief's departure, the dispute with the military command has "finally and completely" ended.

Regarding the date for Gen. Ortega's departure, Lacayo replied: "Ask BARRICADA." On Wednesday, 4 May, this newspaper reported that an agreement had been reached on the date—21 February 1995—during a "secret meeting" on 3 May.

Ramiro Gurdian, president of COSEP [Higher Council of Private Enterprise], said he hoped that Gen. Ortega's departure would come sooner, but he added that the date announced "is good, because it removes tension from the political environment."

Minister Lacayo confirmed the existence of a comprehensive plan against the criminal groups, as was announced by Gen. Ortega.

"This plan has been in operation since 15 April. I said in Jinotega that once the last group of the 3-80 Northern Front was demobilized, there would be opportunity to fight with firmness and a strong hand those robbers who are attacking producers," Lacayo added.

Cuadra Amenable To Replacing H. Ortega

PA0805192194 Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 6 May 94 pp 1, 10

[Text] Major General Joaquin Cuadra Lacayo of the Sandinist People's Army (EPS) yesterday virtually proclaimed himself Humberto Ortega's replacement as head of the Army once Ortega goes into retirement.

"If contemplated in the legal mechanisms and if they propose my name to fill the post, I would agree to become Army chief," Cuadra responded to a colleague's question.

Yesterday Cuadra represented the EPS at an official assembly of the legislative branch in honor of Taiwanese President Li Teng-hui. At the end of the official ceremony, Cuadra declared that the military change of command process could last months.

Last week, Presidency Minister Antonio Lacayo and EPS Chief Gen. Humberto Ortega announced during a seminar on civic-military relations that both state branches had reached an accord on Ortega's retirement.

The accord establishes that this year the president of the Republic and the supreme chief of the Armed Forces will appoint a new Army chief, in accordance with the current Constitution, and Ortega will officially retire in February 1995.

"Every Army contemplates a transition process during which the head of the military unit surrenders everything in order," Cuadra reiterated.

Ortega's virtual replacement as head of the military refrained from commenting on aspects of the Military Organization Law but stated that his current chief made many contributions to society "and thus deserves its recognition."

Presidency Minister Antonio Lacayo declined to comment on the date for Ortega's retirement.

Lacayo stated that the recent accord reached by the executive and legislative branches and the EPS regarding the Military Reorganization Law "ended the tension."

Regarding the constitutional reforms, the high-ranking government official said the executive branch had sent a proposal to the legislature, and six days ago the legislative branch made a counterproposal.

Panama

Endara Excuses Public Workers To Witness Vote

PA0805164694 Panama City TVN Television Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 8 May 94

[Telephone interview with President Guillermo Endara by TVN News Director Luz Maria Noli in Panama City on 8 May—live]

[Text] [Noli] We have President Guillermo Endara on the telephone line. Go ahead, Mr. President.

[Endara] Thank you very much, Luz Maria. I am calling you to report that I have just made a decision, along with the minister of government and justice. I have decided that public workers will be excused from duty tomorrow until 1230. I just signed a decree stating that the public sector will not work tomorrow morning until 1230. This will allow workers to participate in the vote-counting process.

I also want to take this opportunity to ask the private sector, particularly the National Council of Private Enterprise, Panamanian Chamber of Construction, Chamber of Commerce, Industrialists Association, and all Panamanian businessmen to follow suit. We ask them to allow their workers to report for duty tomorrow at 1230. Why? Because I think the people, in addition to witnessing the voting, must witness the vote-counting process. The vote-counting process must be absolutely aboveboard, and I want the people to see how their votes are counted.

What we are experiencing today in Panama is something we have not seen for years. This opportunity will not present itself again for another five years. Therefore, I ask the private sector to excuse their employees from duty until 1230 tomorrow. It is worthwhile for the Panamanian people to see how their votes are counted, and it will allow us to know for certain who the real president of Panama is. I will relinquish power to that future president of Panama regardless of who he may be, but I want all the people to witness the vote-counting process.

I thank you very much, Luz Maria, for allowing me to inform public workers of a decree issued excusing them from work until 1230 tomorrow. This will allow Panamanians to witness how their votes are counted. They must go to their voting tables and see how their votes are counted.

[Noli] Thank you, Mr. President, for choosing TVN to make this announcement.

Polling Stations Open 8 May for General Elections

PA0805122494 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1203 GMT 8 May 94

[Text] Panama City, 8 May (ACAN-EFE)—Polling stations opened in Panama today at 0700 (1200 GMT) to allow 1.5 million citizens to elect a president, Legislative Assembly representatives, and municipal authorities in the first general elections held since the 1989 U.S. invasion.

Electoral Tribunal Issues First Bulletin

PA0805163894 Panama City Circuito RPC Radio in Spanish 1540 GMT 8 May 94

[Bulletin No. 1 issued by the Electoral Tribunal at the Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City; read by TE Press Secretary Doris Chong Guardia—live]

[Text] The following is the first official bulletin issued by the Electoral Tribunal [TE] on the development of the 8 May elections:

The first report was received from the Veraguas Provincial Directorate, where 535 voting tables have been set up. Provincial Director Gilberto Estrada reported that the elections began normally with good voter turnout, who said they wanted to vote quickly. Only one voting table reported problems. Two officials scheduled to be present at a voting table at the Juan Demostenes Arosemena School did not show up, so they were replaced at 0830. The voting table is now fully staffed. The 10 electoral delegates are all performing their assigned tasks. A candidate for representative in Veraguas Province was caught in a government vehicle that was loaded with campaign propaganda. He was detained.

In Concepcion Bugaba District, Chiriqui Province, one person was caught distributing ballots outside a voting site. This person has been remanded to the appropriate authorities.

Reports received at 0900 indicate that the voting process is proceeding normally in Bocas del Toro Province, with 212 voting tables; Cocle Province, with 410 voting tables; Chiriqui Province, with 830 voting tables; Herrera Province, with 281 voting tables; Los Santos Province, with 248 voting tables; Panama Province, with 2,290 voting tables; and Veraguas Province, with 135 voting tables.

The sources reported that a vehicle rented to the TE was involved in an accident near Colon. The driver, Roberto Salcedo, was admitted to the Amador Guerrero Hospital for observation.

We have reports that a heavy rain has been falling in Colon since early this morning. The weather is clear throughout the rest of the country.

The sources consulted all stressed the large voter turnout, especially in Herrera, Los Santos, Panama, and Veraguas Provinces. The sources also stressed the order and discipline of the voters at the various voting sites, especially in Panama Province, where there are 2,290 voting tables, 45 percent of the country's total number of voting tables.

This has been the first official bulletin issued by the TE on today's elections. We will have more reports for you in the next few hours . Thank you.

Election Proceeding 'Smoothly'

PA0805201294 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 1857 GMT 8 May 94

[Bulletin No. 2 issued by the Electoral Tribunal [TE] at the Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City; read by TE Press Secretary Doris Chong Guardia—live]

[Text] Today, Sunday, 8 May, the National Vote-Counting Board will be installed at 1400 at the Atlapa Convention Center.

On 50th Street, a car carrying former Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo Odio collided with another vehicle, but there were no serious problems for the distinguished guest who has been invited here by the Electoral Tribunal [TE] as an observer. Carazo later met with ex-U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

In Bocas del Toro, a TE source reported that the process is proceeding smoothly at the province's 211 voting sites. This is one of the few provinces where there are no independent candidates.

As for Cocle Province, it has been reported that a phone call warning that a bomb had been planted was received at the Dominican Republic School voting site. The incident was handled by the Police Investigations Department, the Public Force, and the National Civil Protection System. The area was evacuated for 30 minutes. It was confirmed that the call had been a false alarm. In Colon, the 346 voting sites opened normally. Nothing unusual has happened in the province.

Our correspondent in Chiriqui reports that the voting is going smoothly and that the people are displaying a great sense of civic responsibility. In David, electoral officials penalized certain businesses which, in violation of the law, sold alcoholic beverages. Everything is normal in Herrera Province, it was reported at noon. A large voter turnout is reported in Los Santos Province.

In Panama Province, voters went to the voting sites in an orderly manner, particularly in metropolitan Panama. In Canita de Chepo, a candidate for representative was detained when he was caught with electoral material in a state-owned vehicle. The candidate also verbally abused the electoral official who questioned him. The vehicle was confiscated. Voting sites 1832 and 1833 in Rio Iglesias opened to voters at 1300 after damaged ballots for corregimiento representatives were replaced.

The general consensus, at least in Panama City, is that the doubts on the use of the single ballot have been dispelled. The ballot is being used with no problem.

Electoral Process Concludes

PA0905000694 Panama City Television Network in Spanish 2213 GMT 8 May 94

[Bulletin No. 3 issued by the Electoral Tribunal, TE, at the Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City; read by TE Press Secretary Doris Chong Guardia—live]

[Text] The voting process in Bocas del Toro Province has ended, and everything is in order. As the voting process ended in Los Santos Province, we learned that the elections were held amid a peaceful atmosphere; however, minor incidents occurred and were quickly resolved. Several political party representatives, who arrived at the voting centers to cast their votes as they were closing, complained in Chitre, Ocu, and Parita Districts. They began complaining when voting table authorities enforced the guidelines for such cases. Due to technical problems at the relay station and despite great efforts made to reestablish communication lines with the

San Blas Indian Reservation, we were unable to obtain details about the final phase of the voting process in this Indian region.

Meanwhile, in Darien Province, along the Colombian border, it was reported that the end of the voting process went smoothly, despite a six-hour delay at two voting tables in Rio Iglesias. This problem was solved, and lost time was recovered. In Cocle, it was reported that the voting process went as planned, but a couple of vote-buying incidents took place in Cabuya hamlet. The Anton municipal attorney is handling the investigations. There was a shortage of 20 presidential ballots at a voting table in Salineta de Nata, but Electoral Tribunal [TE] officials immediately supplied them.

Meanwhile, the Electoral District Vote-Counting Boards were set up at 1400 in Chiriqui Province, and the wait for the end of the elections began. Now that voters have finished voting, these electoral organizations have started performing their duties.

Most international observers invited by the TE came back from their tours of the many electoral posts in the countryside and concluded their observations in the metropolitan area, where they witnessed the end of the electoral process at several voting tables.

As we conclude this third bulletin, we inform the media that from now on the flow of information is in the hands of the TE information system, as announced by the honorable TE magistrates. Thank you.

Announcement Concludes Voting

PA0805214694 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 2059 GMT 8 May 94

["Text" of the official announcement closing the Panamanian 1994 presidential election from the ATLAPA Convention Center Election Media Center in Panama City; read by announcer—live relay]

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen: In accordance with the provisions established by the Electoral Tribunal related to the 1994 general elections, today, Sunday, 8 May, at 4 PM [2100 GMT] in the afternoon, we hereby arrive at the conclusion of the voting process.

Electoral Tribunal Updates Results

PA0905142694 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1310 GMT 9 May 94

[Communique issued by the Electoral Tribunal, TE, from the Atlapa Conventions Center in Panama City; read by TE President Eduardo Valdes Escoffery; broadcast in progress—live]

[Text] ...cast in the presidential elections, with only 32,842 or 3 percent of the votes annulled. In other words, a turnout was 73.82 percent and the abstention rate was 26.10 percent.

From the time the first results were issued representing only 11.8 percent of the voting tables, the figures have always favored candidate Ernesto Perez Balladares of the United People alliance.

Here are the latest figures available: Ernesto Perez Balladares, 33.19 percent; Mireya Moscoso de Gruber [Democratic Alliance], 28.86 percent; Ruben Blades [Papa Egoro Movement], 17.56 percent; Ruben Carles [Change 94], 16.36 percent; Eduardo Vallarino [Christian Democratic Party], 2.15 percent; Samuel Lewis Galindo [National Accord Alliance], 1.57 percent; and Jose Salvador Munoz [Doctrinaire Panamenist Party], 0.32 percent.

The Electoral Tribunal must clarify that according to the law, the National Vote-Counting Board must proclaim the official results of the 8 May 1994 elections for president and vice presidents of the Republic. Only 15 hours after the elections and the closure of the polls, we have managed to unofficially announce almost 90 percent of the results, which is unprecedented in the history of Panamanian elections.

At this time, the TE's main office declares a recess until 1400 while the computer personnel continue to register the results as they are received from the 547 tables that have not yet been counted.

Issued in Panama City on 9 May 1994.

Thank you.

Election Results Expected by 12-13 May

PA0905070294 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 0435 GMT 9 May 94

[Interview with Roberto Lombana, president of the Panamanian National Vote-Counting Board, by Ciro Ortega and Alexandra Ciniglio at the Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Ortega] There has been word of a recess; what does this mean?

[Lombana] Good evening. We had called for a meeting at 2300 today [0400 GMT 9 May], thinking that by then we would have figures for the first circuit—namely 8-7—per Electoral Tribunal plans. Apparently there has been some delay in the electoral district vote count, and it is believed that it will be 0100 [0600 GMT 9 May] before it is ready. This means the National Vote-Counting Board has again gone into recess until that time. Likewise, we have reports that 8-8 and 8-9 will arrive about one hour after 8-7 is received. In other words, we have enough work for all the predawn hours.

[Ciniglio] Can you explain the difference between the work of the National Vote-Counting Board and the work in the press room with the unofficial results?

[Lombana] It is important to point out that the unofficial results released by the Electoral Tribunal, as the word

indicates, are unofficial results. We, at the National Vote-Counting Board will receive the vote tally sheets covering the 40 electoral districts, which collect the results of the 5,310 voting tables throughout the country. In the presence of and together with political party representatives to the National Vote-Counting Board, we will count and certify that what the vote tally sheets say agrees with what the voting tables received.

[Ciniglio] In view of the delay, when do you think the National Vote-Counting Board will proclaim the next president of the Republic?

[Lombana] We continue with our plan of four to six days. In other words, we hope to do our duty by Thursday or Friday.

President Endara Thanks Electoral Institutions

PA0905001794 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 2303 GMT 8 May 94

[Interview with President Guillermo Endara by Dorita de Reyna at the Presidential Palace in Panama City on 8 May—recorded]

[Text] [Reyna] Good afternoon, Mr. President. How do you feel today?

[Endara] I must say I am happy and proud to be a Panamanian. I am happy because when I went out to vote, I saw in the faces of the Panamanian people the same pride I felt. People feel proud of their democracy and freedom. That makes me very happy as president and as a Panamanian citizen.

[Reyna] What institutions do you think helped you in your democratic work?

[Endara] Many. I must mention the Public Force, in particular the National Police. Five years ago, this body was an Army with military training. Today, the police are performing their duties by helping voters cast their votes and preserve order. The Supreme Court of Justice has played a very important role, not just because it has remained independent of the executive branch. Not only that, when the executive branch overstepped its duties regarding rights—thank God, it did very few times—the Court ruled against us and we abided by its decision immediately because we know this Court is very responsible. I must also thank the Legislative Assembly. Although I do not enjoy a majority there, it has supported me when fundamental proposals, such as the Electoral Code, have been presented. In general, I must thank government and opposition parties because they handled the campaign very well and enjoyed democracy.

[Reyna] What advice would you give the candidate who comes out the winner, after all of the votes in the ballot boxes are counted?

[Endara] To protect these democratic institutions we have put to work during this brief period of time, he should protect and preserve them so they can mature. It would be criminal to let something so beautiful be ruined. I would say this should be the primary concern.

[Reyna] Mr. President, a message for the 18 countries of the continent of America who are watching us through Cadena Sur?

[Endara] I thank all Latin American friendly countries for the support they have given Panama in its struggle for democracy and freedom. We have always appreciated this support. We expect them to continue supporting us now that we live in freedom and democracy so this democratic experiment can continue and we can live in a free, democratic America.

Vote-Counting Board President on Elections

PA0805205994 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1902 GMT 8 May 94

[Interview with Roberto Lombana, president of the National Vote-Counting Board, by Octavio Cogley at the ATLAPA Convention Center Election Media Center in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Cogley] In a few minutes, the National Vote-Counting Board will be installed right here in La Huaca Hall of the ATLAPA Convention Center. We are here with Mr. Roberto Alfredo Lombana, with whom we will be speaking about what is going to take place with the National Vote-Counting Board. Mr. Roberto Alfredo Lombana, this afternoon, in just a few minutes, the National Vote-Counting Board will be installed. The representatives of each of the political parties are already beginning to arrive. What will the board's main duty be? Basically, what is the National Vote-Counting Board responsible for?

[Lombana] Of course. The National Vote-Counting Board is an autonomous body appointed by the Electoral Tribunal [TE] and made up of representatives of the 15 political parties participating in the election process. Our responsibility lies in counting the 40 electoral districts covering the total number of votes of the 5,310 voting tables located throughout the country and to proclaim the president of the Republic.

[Cogley] With respect to the vote count, when precisely will the process begin?

[Lombana] If the TE continues on schedule as it has been operating thus far, we will be receiving the first circuit vote tally sheets at 2300 [0400 GMT on 9 May]. At that time we will also start receiving the other vote tally sheets. We expect that in four or five days we will proclaim the election winner.

[Cogley] How does the National Vote-Counting Board assess the work done by the TE?

[Lombana] It has been quite positive. We have received excellent support from the TE and they have helped us to organize this event to such an extent that today, at 1400 this afternoon, we will begin operations.

[Cogley] What can you say about the populations' participation?

[Lombana] I believe that we are not only witnessing admirable participation by the presidential candidates, but also from the population in general. The mood has been quite festive.

[Cogley] Thank you very much Mr. Roberto Lombana for your statements to Telemetro Panama.

TE Magistrate Comments on Voter Turnout

PA0805232994 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 2120 GMT 8 May 94

[Interview with Electoral Tribunal President Eduardo Valdes Escoffery and Electoral Delegate President Juan Francisco de la Guardia by Octavio Cogley at the ATLAPA Convention Center Election Media Center in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Cogley] We are here with Electoral Tribunal [TE] President Mr. Eduardo Valdes Escoffery and also Electoral Delegate President Juan Francisco de la Guardia. Welcome gentlemen. We are witnessing the conclusion of the voting phase of the election process. I understand that only those voters who were in line when the voting process ended and those members of the various boards related to the election process will be allowed to vote from here on. Let us listen to Magistrate Valdes Escoffery comments on the significance of these elections, in which we have been able to witness that the Panamanian people have conducted themselves very peacefully, and that the elections so far have proceeded very normally.

[Valdes] Well, first of all, as Panamanians, we are really delighted with the degree of patience, tolerance, aptitude, and ability to fraternize with each other that the political adversaries have demonstrated. We have seen all of them in action. They have all been very cooperative. Men, women, even the children who had their own special elections. Even they had long lines at their respective voting centers. Incredibly, even senior citizens went to vote and where patient enough when their voting tables were not located on a ground floor. Some of these senior citizens even went to vote with their walkers.

Practically, no one has complained about the organization. We have received numerous congratulations. The mood has been festive and everyone has shared in this mood. This really has no precedence. We were just commenting that we would be waking up in a different country. I believe that we all feel the same. We must all feel quite delighted. Let us hope that those limited defects that took place in some areas were finally overcome and we will be able to implement whatever corrective measures the law specifies in a civilized manner as occurs in every election process.

I have been able to participate in numerous elections during the past year since we are currently undergoing a wave of democratic renovation. Even in Chile, a country with a very long cultural tradition, I was at a voting center where the voting table could open because the party poll representatives had not shown up. In Chile, party poll representatives hold their positions for a fixed period, and they had just had a turnover and the new representatives were not familiar with their responsibilities, and they were just discussing how to operate the voting table. In other words, every election process has some confusion. Let us hope that what we have all seen and shared today can be understood in the tolerant manner we have demonstrated so far.

[Cogley] Mr. Juan Francisco de la Guardia, do you agree with the statements by the TE magistrate? Has everything proceeded normally? Have there been any problems? You were responsible for coordinating everything related to the electoral delegates. In addition to that, you were also involved in supervising that the election process would proceed normally.

[De la Guardia] Not only has it proceeded normally, it has also been an extraordinary example of civic conscience by the Panamanian people. It was really amazing how the people showed up to vote beginning very early in the morning. The voting centers were crowded beginning at 0630 and 0700. It was incredible how the people went to their respective voting centers and how great was their desire to cast their votes. They were eager to express their opinion through their votes. This is the way we have always wanted it to be in our country. We have had an election festival.

[Cogley] Well, Mr. Magistrate President, thank you very much for your comments.

TE Preliminary Results: PRD Leading

PA0905015994 Panama City Television Network in Spanish 0115 GMT 9 May 94

["Report" by Panamanian Electoral Tribunal President Eduardo Valdes Escoffery from the Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City—live]

[Text] In the number of voting sites accounted for, an abstention rate of 27.48 percent has been reported. Therefore, 72.52 percent of the registered voters participated in the elections. This is the breakdown of 11.8 percent of voting sites tallied. You will be given more details, for consultation purposes, as soon as we finish giving this report.

Candidate Ernesto Perez Balladares of the United People Alliance received 32.8 percent of the valid votes. Next comes Mireya Moscoso de Gruber of Democratic Alliance with 30.12 percent. Ruben Carles of the Change '94 Alliance comes in third with 16.92 percent. Ruben Blades of the Papa Egoro Movement placed fourth with 15.89 percent. Edy Vallarino of the Christian Democratic Party comes in fifth with 2.54 percent. Sammy

Lewis Galindo of Concertacion Nacional attained 1.44 percent and occupies sixth place. Jose Salvador Munoz of the Doctrinaire Panamenista Party brings up the rear with 0.21 percent.

These figures will be made available in a few minutes through the television system we have set up for you. This information will be updated approximately every 10 minutes from now on via the systems you people have been trained to consult. Thank you.

Exit Poll Confirms PRD's Perez Balladares Leads

PA0905021294 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 2336 GMT 8 May 94

[Interview with Victor Borge, member of the Borge y Asociados Company, by Dorita de Reyna at the Telemetro Studios in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Reyna] After hearing the statement by the magistrates of the Electoral Tribunal [TE], Telemetro Television contracted the services of the Borge y Asociados company, which conducted an exit poll for us. We must clarify that these are simply projected figures. Mr. Victor Borge, could you tell us what an exit poll is?

[Borge] All day long we have conducted a poll at more than 120 locations throughout the Republic. We have asked people who are leaving the premises after casting their vote who they voted for. The data collected has been sent via telephone and fax to our computer center, where it has been processed. This is the first projection of how people were voting all day long.

[Reyna] Throughout the entire country?

[Borge] Yes, throughout the country.

[Reyna] Would you then give us the results of your poll?

[Borge] Yes. Let's take a look at the graphs. According to this poll, candidate Ernesto Perez Balladares of the Democratic Revolutionary Party [PRD] is in the lead with 37.8 percent of the votes. Second place is close between Ruben Blades of the Papa Egoro Party, who has 23.4 percent, and Mrs. Mireya Moscoso de Gruber of the Arnulfista Party, with 22.4 percent of the votes. Next in line is Ruben Dario Carles, with 11.2 percent of the votes.

These figures have an error margin of plus or minus 3 percent, so we cannot be certain whether Mr. Blades or Mrs. Moscoso de Gruber is in second place.

TE President Urges Caution on Exit Poll

PA0905023494 Panama City Television Network in Spanish 2333 GMT 8 May 94

[Announcement by Panamanian Electoral Tribunal President Eduardo Valdes Escoffery from the Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City; broadcast in progress—live]

[Text] ...beginning [words indistinct] this afternoon polling firms are authorized to release the results of the polls they conducted today, but obeying Decree No. 27 dated 12 April and Decree No. 40 dated 29 April 1994. Regardless of this, the Electoral Tribunal [TE] has the duty to caution citizens that these polls are based on approximations, which in turn are based on questions answered by citizens who voted and who have varying degrees of credibility. Even though the polls themselves may have been conducted with rigid scientific parameters, these are nevertheless only polls and are not based on true events.

Because of this, all polls have a margin of error, therefore there is no room for claiming victory. We also wish to caution that once this information is shared with the people, no person who may be favored by these polls may violate the TE's provision that states that all demonstrations, gatherings, and caravans are totally and absolutely forbidden, according to the law, until 1200 on Monday, 9 May 1994.

We reiterate it is absolutely essential that no one should celebrate any sort of triumph, because other groups could do the same and clashes between these groups could endanger the peace we have enjoyed all day long. Only the results released by the TE, which will be based on true election results from the voting tables and only the National Vote-Counting Board can, according to the law, release final and definitive official results.

The TE takes this opportunity to reiterate to the citizens its pledge to issue authentic and unquestionable results regarding the national elections held today, 8 May 1994. Many thanks.

Perez Balladares Announces Electoral Victory

PA0905061194 Panama City Television Network in Spanish 0349 GMT 9 May 94

[News conference by Ernesto Perez Balladares, presidential candidate of the Democratic Revolutionary Party, PRD, with unidentified reporters at the PRD campaign headquarters in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Perez Balladares] Fellow citizens: According to the Electoral Tribunal's [TE] figures at 2243 this evening, 52.32 percent of the polling tables have been tallied. This yields a total of 613,017 votes. A trend has prevailed since the tally began, and it has not changed. It signifies that we have won the 1994 elections. [crowd applauds, chants: "Toro!"]

The TE's figures coincide very well with our party's own figures. A large number of votes have yet to be tallied in Panama Province, where the advantage in our favor is greater, so all the analysts—both ours and independent ones—accept this trend is irreversible and, consequently, the winner is yours truly. [applause] Thank you.

I do not want to extend the wait any longer. I want to thank all the Panamanian people—those who voted for

me, of course, and those who opposed us, too—for their civic-mindedness and for the behavior we observed throughout the campaign and today on election day. We now begin, as we have said, to build, united, without differences or political disputes, the nation's future, for the youth and the children.

Thank you, Panamanian people, for extraordinary and exemplary civic behavior. [applause] I also want in particular to thank the whole United People campaign team for work and deeds that seemed like a dream five years ago. We are determined to recover our national dignity, and we are doing it—with your support, in the first place, and the support of all the Panamanian people.

We now begin a different phase. The elections are over today; electoral politics are over today. We now begin a phase that demands the best from all Panamanians to achieve what is still our goal: a free, independent, and sovereign country with equal opportunities for each and every one of us. Thank you, everyone, and we will continue to work, united, for the 21st century. Thank you. [crowd applauds, chants: "Toro!"]

[Reporter] Any names for cabinet members?

[Perez Balladares] No, not yet,

[Reporter] How do you feel to be the first president elected in this country in free and honest elections in more than three decades?

[Perez Balladares] Personally, I am extremely proud. I accept this victory with a great degree of humility because we have received a clear message from the Panamanian people, who want to leave the dark days behind, want to look forward with optimism, and want all Panamanians to join together to enter into what should be Panama's golden decade beginning with our government. [applause]

[Reporter] Are you ready to [words indistinct]?

[Perez Balladares] I do not have the slightest doubt: I am accompanied by very capable men and women. But we want to add more. We want this to be a truly representative government, a government based on an agreement among all Panamanians. Together we will be able to achieve this.

[Reporter] Are you going to work with [words indistinct] parties?

[Perez Balladares] We are now going to begin to form a government that we can feel proud of, one that will allow all Panamanians to feel that they are being worthily represented.

[Reporter] Does this mean that you would form your government with parties that have opposed you?

[Perez Balladares] Throughout my campaign I said that I was willing and hoping to form a government with the best men and women available, regardless of political persuasion, and I am now reiterating this following my victory.

[Reporter] What about the names in today's extra edition of LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA—can you confirm if any of them are going to be members of your cabinet?

[Perez Balladares] Not yet, not yet.

[Reporter] How can you guarantee that you will be able to rule if you will possibly be facing a Legislative Assembly and most of the media in the hands of the opposition?

[Perez Balladares] I believe that the opposition they put up was during the electoral campaign. Now national goals should unite us. We now have other things, far more superior things, to bring us together.

[Reporter] Is it true that you already have received telephone calls from the Christian Democratic Party candidate and the Solidarity Party candidate?

[Perez Balladares] I hope that our opponents—these two as well as the others—will make their own statement. I would rather not say anything. I do want to take advantage of your question, however, to give thanks to those six candidates who accompanied us in this campaign because I believe that between all of us we have managed to, first, set the national goals, and then to carry out a campaign as we did—with a few slip-ups, perhaps, but for the most part a high-level campaign. Thanks, then, to the presidential candidates.

[Reporter] Does your victory also include a majority in the Legislative Assembly?

[Perez Balladares] It is too early to comment on this. We are waiting for the results from the TE.

[Reporter] Do you have any idea, though, since you were asking your supporters to vote for the entire slate?

[Perez Balladares] I understand that our party received the most votes in the elections, but it is very difficult—due to the system itself—to know how many legislators won.

[Reporter] President Endara invited you to work with him. He is going to give you a status report on the presidency. Are you going to accept this invitation?

[Perez Balladares] Yes, of course.

[Reporter] When do you plan to meet with him?

[Perez Balladares] When he invites me to do so.

[Reporter] You speak of a policy of a free and sovereign country. When one comes to Panama one finds a dollar economy. What are you going to change?

[Perez Balladares] Sovereignty and the circulation of the U.S. dollar are not incompatible. Nowadays the majority of Latin American economies are dollarized economies.

The only difference is that the dollar circulates in Panama as an international currency; it could be the dollar or any other international currency. Our complete and total sovereignty will be assured with the faithful fulfillment of the Torrijos-Carter treaties over the next five years.

[Reporter] Is this your commitment with the Panamanian people?

[Perez Balladares] Yes, sir.

[Reporter] What are your plans for foreign policy and for relations with the United States?

[Perez Balladares] I think that in the two cases there will be high-level policies, policies of respect in which each country will have to fight for its national interests and objectives. Sometimes they will be compatible, and sometimes they will differ, but there should be a lot of respect and lofty attitudes, as is called for in relations between grown-up countries and between peoples that share common interests.

[Reporter] What type of relationship will you maintain with the international financial institutions [IFI's]?

[Perez Balladares] The same relationship we have always had. I believe that these are necessary relations, and the IFI's help many countries to attain development goals that are necessary. It is a matter of being able to explain our national interests well and to obtain, via negotiations, agreements that are in keeping with our national interests.

[Reporter] Your opponents still hope that the results of the elections might change.

[Perez Balladares] I believe everyone will have hopes until all the votes are counted. That is why I said that these figures are not mine; they are TE figures. I also said that the analysts, not only our analysts but the independent analysts as well, say that due to the way the vote count is headed, because of the trend that it has shown from the very beginning, it is practically impossible for the final result to change.

[Reporter] How do you think the United States is going to react now that many people who were ousted from power thanks to the invasion are going to return to power thanks to the votes?

[Perez Balladares] Neither the United States nor I have said this. You are saying it. The party has returned to power. I was not in power during the invasion. Our party is a renovated party, as we have said on many occasions. In addition, we are a party that on several occasions, in practice, has given clear proof of internal democracy; a party that in any event represents the victory of democracy in Panama. I do not see how the United States can do anything other than applaud this democratic victory in Panama.

[Reporter] Do you believe militarism is completely ruled out in Panama?

[Perez Balladares] Yes, sir. There is no military here, nor any possibility of returning to any phase of the previous militarism.

[Reporter] What would you tell General Torrijos at this time?

[Perez Balladares] We have picked up your flag, kissed it, and continued onward. [cheers and applause]

Democratic Alliance Candidate Comments

PA0905034294 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 0241 GMT 9 May 94

[Interview with Mireya Moscoso de Gruber, presidential candidate of the Democratic Alliance, by Lyssette Condassin; place not given—live]

[Text] [Condassin] Dr. Arnulfo Arias [founder of the Arnulfist Party] became an immortal personality for Panamanians. You, in a certain way, also became a very important personality, not only because you are the first woman to compete in the [presidential] elections, but because you are perhaps very close to becoming the first woman president of the Republic. Dona Mireya, as a woman, how do you feel? What can you tell us?

[Moscoso] I feel very happy to see that the Panamanian people have given me support, affection. I have been walking for three months and wherever have I walked people have welcomed me with plenty of affection. They came out to receive me at their doorstep only to shake hands. Some wanted me only to touch their children and allow them to shake hands; others wanted me to bless them. I have received during these walks so much satisfaction from thousands of people. As a woman, this has been a challenge for me, but I am very happy with this challenge.

[Condassin] If you come to power, what would your first action be?

[Moscoso] If tonight or tomorrow I am declared president, the first thing I would do would be to call on all Panamanians, all parties, to join forces. My government will be of national unity. We want the Panamanian people, after 21 years, to be like a family; that we forget the past, the fights; and that this be a government of national reconciliation.

[Condassin] Well, Mrs. Mireya, we want to ask you just one more question because we imagine you are very tired. We want to know, did Dr. Arnulfo Arias ever give you any sort of advice on perhaps how to rule the country?

[Moscoso] [chuckles] Dr. Arias gave me plenty of advice. The truth is that he was a marvelous man; he was my best teacher. Today we have remembered him very much. I believe that wherever Dr. Arias is he must feel very

proud of what I have done for his party and what I am doing for the people. This is work that he was not allowed to complete and I know I will complete for him.

[Condassin] Did you, while you were his wife, ever imagine that you could be president of the Republic of Panama?

[Moscoso] Never. He was this country's leader; he was president five times, elected by the people's will. I was only his companion; I was his wife, but I never thought I would attain this position. I am in this position because God has placed me on this path, but I never imagined.

[Condassin] Dear viewers, Arnulfist Party members have a very positive attitude. Even though results are still not official, these results greatly favor this party, according to the Arnulfists.

Further on Moscoso de Gruber Remarks

PA0905063094 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 0253 GMT 9 May 94

[Interview with Mireya Moscoso de Gruber, Democratic Alliance presidential candidate, by journalist Barbara Bloise in Panama City; broadcast in progress—live]

[Text] [Bloise] ...figures the Electoral Tribunal [TE] has revealed so far and what you have been saying in various statements?

[Gruber] Yes. We are comparing the figures we continue to receive with the figures the TE is giving on television. We see we have more or less the same figures, but we still lack many figures, above all from the countryside. We only have figures from the cities, which is what has been shown.

[Bloise] What guarantees do the women, above all, have in your government if you win the presidency?

[Gruber] Look, as a woman I believe women should be granted greater participation, so women would have equal participation with the men in my government. I do not want to imply that men would not participate, but we would.... [changes thought] We will certainly try to make sure that women have a major role in my government. They will.

[Bloise] The Arnulfist Party has always stood out as a nationalist party that is deeply rooted among the people. What will be your position concerning a renegotiation of the military bases?

[Gruber] We have said my government will hold a referendum and the Panamanian people will decide whether the military bases will remain beyond 1999. If they decide yes, then we will ask the United States to renegotiate these bases—provided the United States also wants this.

[Bloise] Under what conditions would these negotiations be carried out?

[Gruber] We would first have to talk with the Americans. That is what I can tell you.

[Bloise] What will be your government's position regarding the foreign debt?

[Gruber] We know we have a commitment, and the debt must be paid. My government will not say it will not pay. We have this commitment, and we will fulfill this commitment, too.

[Bloise] How will you feel concerning results.... [changes thought] What will be your position concerning the results of today's elections?

[Gruber] How can I feel? We know the results will be known, perhaps in the early morning hours, and we also know the results will be in our favor. Therefore, we will feel happy, and we feel happy about the support the Panamanian people have given us. We have a commitment to the Panamanian people, so we will wait for the results. It is only a matter of a few hours. Thank you. [Crowd chants "Mireya!"]

Moscoso Views Results

PA0905051394 Panama City TVN Television Network in Spanish 0302 GMT 8 May 94

[Interview with Mireya Moscoso de Gruber, Democratic Alliance presidential candidate, by unidentified reporters at Democratic Alliance headquarters in Panama City on 8 May—recorded]

[Text] [Moscoso] We have just seen on television the results announced by the Electoral Tribunal [TE], but we still have to wait for the figures from the National Vote-Counting Board. However, I have noticed—as I mentioned on several occasions—that polarization has occurred between the Arnulfista Party [PA] and the Democratic Revolutionary Party [PRD]. The data we are seeing tonight confirms this once more. The data likewise confirms that the fake polls that were being announced were in fact rigged, and that they were aimed at building up two candidates. We can see whose figures are very low, while the PA figures are competing with the PRD figures.

[Reporter] Do you believe the PA is going to win?

[Moscoso] Of course we are going to win.

[Reporter] If you lose, will you concede defeat?

[Moscoso] Pardon me?

[Reporter] If the PRD happens to win, will you concede defeat?

[Moscoso] First, I believe that I am going to win. If such a possibility exists, however, what we want is a calm and peaceful country. I believe that Panama experienced 21 years of uncertainty, so if the PRD wins—if the TE and the National Vote-Counting Board confirm this—we will recognize its victory.

[Reporter] The Christian Democratic Party [PDC] candidate has conceded defeat.

[Moscoso] He already has?

[Reporter] Yes.

[Moscoso] I had not heard that, but I think that it is still too early to recognize the victory of another candidate.

[Reporter] Mrs. Mireya. If you win the elections, what would be your government's number one priority?

[Moscoso] I have already said that if an announcement is made tonight that we have won the elections I will call for national reconciliation by all Panamanians, all political parties, including the PRD, the good people who are in the PRD too. This would be my priority.

[Reporter] Mrs. Mireya: According to the figures being provided by the TE, the PRD is currently in the lead. On what do you base your optimism? How do you plan to take the lead?

[Moscoso] There are many votes still left to be counted, especially votes from the interior of the Republic, and I am leading there, in the interior.

[Reporter] There is a forecast of [words indistinct].

[Moscoso] No, not yet. I think that should be left up to the TE.

[Reporter] The TE maintains its ban on mobilizations and demonstrations until the final official returns are in. Regarding the activities under way by both the PRD and the PA, isn't this a violation of the TE rules?

[Moscoso] No. I think they are doing the right thing. If results are announced now by anyone other than the TE, it would be premature. People would take to the streets. We have to wait for the results to be announced by the National Vote-Counting Board. If the results that are announced now are not the same as those that are going to be announced by the National Vote-Counting Board we might find ourselves in a huge bind. I think it is best for us to wait. I agree with this.

[Reporter] Due to the heated emotions of both PRD and PA sympathizers, don't you think this is inadvisable? As the evening wears on, people get more keyed up. In the event of a defeat, wouldn't these people take to the streets denouncing an alleged fraud?

[Moscoso] For the first time in many years, we have a TE that everyone knows is made up of very honorable persons. I believe that now in Panama no one is going to scream fraud. We are not going to do this. I don't know if the PRD would scream fraud if they were to lose. Perhaps so, but there is not going to be a fraud. These elections have been clean, honest, and whoever wins will be the president of Panama. It is true that right now our fellow party members are there, downstairs, but they are dancing, they are calm. Instead of taking to the streets, I would rather they stay here than go out on the streets late at night. That would be dangerous.

PA Spokesman Calls PRD Victory 'Premature'

PA0905065694 Panama City TVN Television Network in Spanish 0445 GMT 9 May 94

[Interview with Juan B. Chevalier, spokesman for Panama's Arnulfist Party, PA, by an unidentified reporter at PA campaign headquarters in Panama City on 8 May—recorded]

[Text] [Chevalier] I believe Balladares' recent announcement proclaiming victory is a bit premature, because to announce victory with merely half the votes counted is somewhat hasty. I believe there are still half of the votes left to be counted. A runner can still get tired halfway through the race.

[Reporter] What can you say about the vote count, which is taking place at the Atlapa Convention Center?

[Chevalier] I believe the election has been a demonstration of true democracy. The people have voted freely and elected the winner, but we still do not know who the winner is.

[Reporter] What is your opinion on the election process?

[Chevalier] It is an irreproachable process. Panama has given the world an example of how an election process should be carried out. The people have voted with a civic spirit, and their decision has been respected so far.

[Reporter] Do you believe the PA will triumph in these elections?

[Chevalier] What's that?

[Reporter] Do you believe the PA will emerge the winner in these elections?

[Chevalier] Of course. I have always said the elections were between this country's two largest parties. I have always maintained that the struggle was between the PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party] and the PA. Certain sectors went around talking about other candidates who I personally believe should not have participated in the elections. The results so far have proven me right....

[Reporter, interrupting] Such as which candidates?

[Chevalier] You know perfectly well to whom I am referring. Please do not ask me foolish questions. [laughs]

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] ...a reconciliation?

[Chevalier] I do not believe.... [pauses] I have always said we can be adversaries but not enemies; these are two different concepts.

[Reporter] Don't you believe that with the two parties claiming victory this could lead to violence and intolerance?

[Chevalier] I do not believe this could be the case, because we are all willing to accept the final verdict, but the votes must first be counted. I believe it is a bit hasty to proclaim victory in the middle of the race. That is all I wanted to say, and I reiterate it. I believe it is a bit hasty; moreover, the Electoral Tribunal has been stating that candidates should not make victory statements and that they should wait until the National Vote- Counting Board announces who won; therefore, to claim victory halfway through the vote count is comparable to making excuses beforehand.

Papa Egoro's Blades Comments

PA0905072194 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 0437 GMT 9 May 94

[News conference bv Ruben Blades, presidential candidate of the Papa Egoro Movement, with unidentified reporters at the Seaside View restaurant in Panama City—live]

[Excerpt] [Blades] I thank everyone for their presence here. I think the best way to handle this conference is by my answering questions.

[Reporter] Your opinion of the Electoral Tribunal's first results?

[Blades] Although the Electoral Tribunal's results, which place us in third, are preliminary, we have no reason to doubt the figures.

[Reporter] How do you correlate this report with the opinion poll results released a few days ago?

[Blades] We have always said that we had a job to do regardless of the results of the polls. Let us wait until the final results are released.

[Reporter] Do you still have the faith you had spoken about?

[Blades] I will tell you something. We have been ranked third. But in relation to whom? Two groups with tremendous general experience. They are people with great resources and experience in and from government offices. I think Papa Egoro Movement [MPE] did an excellent job, regardless of the final results. [applause] Had I been advised, before the beginning of the campaign, that the movement would occupy third place as part of the defense of a different option, I would have participated all the same. [applause]

I will not accept any results until the final figures are given. If Dr. Perez Balladares wins, rest assured that the MPE will endorse this decision of the Panamanian people and that we will hand over to him our whole program and our position. Because this is not an issue among parties, but one that involves the whole country. We never took an antagonistic position. Some people ask me whether we will become opposition. I have answered that we would constitute a group of proposals, something we have always been. We will not change this position. Nor will we reject the results of the people's will.

[Reporter] In other words, the party will keep going.

[Blades] We will keep going with all of the Panamanian people. [applause] We will not shift our position. We started this political work because we have always believed there must be a different alternative. In the national political system, we have found plenty of selfishness and division. Regardless of the future political panorama, the country can rest assured that everything we said we said from the heart and will do. Papa Egoro will not vanish. Many parties, created just to have access to the distribution of power, will disappear. We did not create our political party with this purpose in mind. We will keep working, we will not vanish. I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate all of the MPE members who have worked to create this movement for more than three years. There are many heroes, men and women. There was a time when it appeared impossible to have an alternative outside of the parameters used by traditional parties. Party members did everything possible to contribute their faith and hope to this movement. Rest assured that this quota of hope and faith will flourish and grow. No one is defecting. The party is not for rent or for sale. The party will not quit. [applause] I also wish to tell everyone that I am very proud of belonging to the movement.

I believe that the work we have done has set new parameters in national politics. This is the first time that a political party has been formed without having been founded on ideological or economic terms or without pressure from certain national [?groups] or sectors. This is the first time that this has occurred. I think we have altered all the parameters of national political conduct.

On the personal level, I am very happy that I participated on behalf of a party that always presented its position in decent terms. We never attacked anyone; we never insulted anyone, even though there were campaigns against me, my wife, and my family. We never stepped back from the threshold of decency and did not fall prey to the temptation of returning insult for insult. We are not going to do this now either.

The person who obtains the majority of votes, and in this case it might be the PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party] and Dr. Perez Balladares, can be completely certain that the MPE will accept this popular dictate. As I said earlier, we are going to present our programs to improve any proposal they might have. I would like to say in passing that our proposals were the best. [unidentified voice says: Right on!; followed by cheers and applause] We are going to present our plans to improve theirs. They can be completely certain that we are not going to become an obstacle out of selfishness or pettiness. I would like the other political parties in Panama to

not react in the traditional manner, and to refrain from attempting to block initiatives that are going to benefit the country.

[Reporter] You have said that you are going to wait for the last vote to be counted to recognize....

[Blades, interrupting] Not necessarily the last vote.

[Reporter] Do you think you could surpass that figure?

[Blades] Let me tell you something: there are still many votes to be counted. I am not saying that we are going to wait in order to offer our support. We already are supporting the winner. I simply believe that we should wait for all the figures out of respect for the Electoral Tribunal [TE], and because this is the right thing to do before conceding, so to speak. However, I am already taking a step forward, and am saying we are going to support whoever wins and will not place obstacles before his government. We ask the same from the other political parties. We are not like the other political parties, and that is why we are asking them to do this. We are asking the traditional political parties to please refrain from trying to hinder the work of whoever wins. The work of that government will be done for the good of the country.

For basic reasons, not because we are in third or fourth place, we are going to wait for the TE to make its announcement, and we will accept their decision. Right now, as far as figures are concerned, everything indicates that Dr. Perez Balladares has won the elections. I congratulate him, the PRD, and the country because the electoral process was carried out honestly. Everyone came out and voted. We supported that and support the actions of the Panamanian Government, which represents Panama, not a party.

[Reporter] Mr. Blades, for some time the MPE held second place behind the PRD. Many people believed that the MPE would be the winner and that it would be able to beat the PRD, a traditional party. What happened? Was there some sort of strategic mistake for the 94 elections?

[Blades] No. I believe there were a number of factors. On the one hand, economic problems kept us from launching our campaign earlier. Many people on the streets told us: If you had started your campaign earlier, perhaps you would have had a chance. This argument is not a solid argument, however. We would not have been able to do this because we did not have the economic means, on the one hand, nor the organization that we needed at that time.

Additionally, we did not have a list of candidates. Any group that begins, and begins broke and in a decent manner, and I am going to repeat this over and over again—in the history of Panama there has never been a party like the MPE. [unidentified voice says: "Never!"; followed by cheers and applause]

Within that reality, within that reality [repeats himself] we were never able to have a greater presence in our country's rural areas—given the lack of resources, organization, and so on—and we needed that. On a personal basis, everyone ganged up against us. Let us call things by their name. The partocracy [partidocracia] ganged up against us. A very negative campaign was launched in recent weeks and, perhaps, it yielded certain results. On a personal basis, we simply accepted that as a test. We overcame that and we continued with our efforts. The movement does not end. That is the good news for the Panamanian people. The struggle continues. [applause, shouts]

Second, I will tell you something. In the event, which apparently occurs now, we lose the elections, in 1999 no one will beat us. [applause, shouts] [chanting: "Ruben! Ruben! Ruben"] This does not mean I will necessarily be the candidate in 1999. That is something the national convention and the national reality will decide, but I think the MPE and its roots of decency are deeply planted. We will settle the situation of slanders and other issues in the courts; and that begins tomorrow. [applause, shouts]

[Reporter] Against whom will you file the lawsuit, Mr. Blades?

[Blades] What?

[Reporter] Against whom will you file the lawsuit?

[Blades] We will file the lawsuit against the persons who used false information to denigrate persons and ideas.

[Reporter] What party is involved?

[Blades] This is not a matter of parties, this is not a matter of parties. [repeats himself] I previously said totally absurd and groundless accusations have been issued. We will not do this in terms of a vendetta, only because we believe the conditions should be given in our country to clearly tell the whole nation you cannot say a person is something he is not.

[Reporter] In what way do you feel offended?

[Blades] Look, it was said here that I was a gringo. [unidentified woman laughs] It was said here that my diploma was forged. [unidentified woman says: It was said he never attended the university.] My mother, may she rest in peace, was attacked here. My wife was attacked here. Well, that... [pauses] she deplores it but we have discussed that issue and, well, such is life. Anyway, people have said things that are not true. Groups.... [pauses] persons within our group have been accused of being members of a national organization—I was accused of being an employee of the government. In other words, a series of accusations have been made and we will prove in a court of law that they are false; and the people who published that will pay [words indistinct]. [applause, shouts]

[Reporter] What will Ruben Blades' future be while this happens? Will you remain in Panama? Will you continue to sing and feature prominently at international level?

[Blades] Well, since you did not give me the job of president [laughter heard in the background] I have to work any way I can. I have not worked for eight months. A lot of emphasis was initially placed on the fact that I am a singer; and many people in the media asked me: Well, will you stop singing? I always asked them: If I were a painter, would you ask me to stop painting? If I were a poet, would you ask me to stop writing? That is part of an erroneous perception that an artist can only play a superfluous role in our society.

This singer, because that is what I have always been and I feel very proud of that, is a singer who has placed his role as an artist, and his condition as a Panamanian, in a prominent place at the world level [applause, shouts] and I continue to do this in the measure of my possibilities. I feel absolutely no shame about this. I believe that, quite the contrary, we have given Panama a very positive image, and we have always continued to extol the role of music as a means of communication.

The real question is whether I will stop taking part in the political process and the reply is no. This is a categoric no. We will continue our work; the MPE will not disappear, and it will not disappear because it represents a banner of national decency. We are not going to leave, we are not going to allow other people to usurp what the people have given us. Something else I want to say today is that in every tour people would say to us.... [pauses] right, Ricardo [Bermudez]? Do not deceive us, do not deceive us. You can be completely sure that this was never our intention. The other thing people would say is we will not see you again. We said we will return regardless of whether we win or lose. The country can be totally sure that I am going to return to all the places I visited to thank everyone for all the support they gave us and to tell people that we will continue to work and toil. [applause]

I believe this exercise has been very positive for the country. I would like, please, for things to be seen in their proper context. We have struggled with what we call vernacularly the bullies [mayullones] in politics. [chuckles] We faced some bullies and we fought clean. The bullies delivered low blows, below the belt, but we did not fall. [applause]

This is not the right moment, on national network, to call attention to these sorts of things, but we do need to say this at the party level. Do you know what it takes to organize a group in three years and that this group suddenly becomes the second or third political force without resources or alliances? [applause] What we simply did was to give shape to a national thought and feeling. People want something different. I hope and everyone hopes that the next government leads us in resolving problems. Again, with all respect, and with our current position as a political party of national importance, I ask, please, that traditional political parties not interfere negatively in the work of the elected government. We must move ahead; we have no more time to lose in more fights, more insults, more slander. Now we all have to work, time is running out. The country needs immediate replies. We will continue to contribute things. It is important that this be clearly understood. I ask, please, all political parties. It is very important that we now concentrate on the task of governing the country, especially with the National Assembly.

It is important that we cast aside party rivalries; the personal and selfish aspects so obvious with the country's traditional political class. The MPE will not hinder the national work because we are part of this work. I ask the other parties to please not hinder the work of the national government, whatever the party. [passage omitted]

Papa Egoro's Bermudez on Results

PA0905044294 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 0319 GMT 9 May 94

[Interview with Ricardo Bermudez, second vice presidential candidate of Papa Egoro, by Lorena Castillo and Ariel Rosas at the Papa Egoro headquarters in Panama City on 8 May—live or recorded]

[Text] [Castillo] The party leaders are assessing the Electoral Tribunal results. We will talk with Bermudez, Papa Egoro candidate for vice president. Mr. Bermudez is here with us.

[Bermudez] The party is just as glad as it was at the beginning. I think we did a very productive job. I wish to mention that only close to 43 percent of the voting sites have been accounted for. There is still nothing final. No final conclusion can be made before we have the final election results. It would be venturesome for any political party to claim victory without first having the total vote count. I wish to stress the need to remain as civically aware as we were today. This has been an extremely pure and beautiful election. But we should not jump to any conclusions before all of the voting sites have been accounted for.

[Rosas] We understand that you talked with candidate Ruben Blades, who is in the headquarters making assessments. What does Blades think?

[Bermudez] Blades has been in touch with us during his tour of the city. He should be arriving here any minute now to make remarks on the party position.

[Rosas] The figures indicate it is very difficult for the party to improve its situation. Do you think Papa Egoro will eventually improve its position before the million vote figure is reached?

[Bermudez] Since the beginning, Papa Egoro was a bastion of the party. We still do not know what percentage of the figures released represent Panama City. May I insist, however, 50 percent of the votes are still to be counted. We should not jump to conclusions at this time.

[Rosas] Polls were conducted in the past few months among the several political parties. How do you correlate past polls with the figures released by the Electoral Tribunal?

[Bermudez] May I reiterate that the Electoral Tribunal has not yet released the final figures. Still 50 percent of the vote must still be totaled. Regarding the national polls, it is worth noting the movement's progressive geometrical growth in the past one and one-half months. I am sure that, once all the votes are tallied, the movement's position will be seen much more clearly.

Candidate Carles Comments

PA0905081094 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 0614 GMT 9 May 94

[Statement by Ruben Dario Carles, Change '94 presidential candidate; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] Those of us here make up the best presidential slate, and you know it because I have insisted that, individually and collectively, we are the best option for the country. In view of all the announcements recently made and the statements recently released, we must make the following observations. We already talked with leaders of the Molirena [Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement], Morena [National Renewal Movement], and Civic Renewal Party. Paradoxically, we the democrats make these statements, convinced that we will accept the results released by the National Vote-Counting Board as definite and fully valid.

Although many people never believed in elections, nor respect public opinion, we say here that we will accept what the Electoral Tribunal [TE] has to say. We must also say that, according to the information already released by it, 48 to 50 percent of the votes have yet to be counted. In light of this situation, it would be irresponsible to declare any party or group of parties the winner. It would be even more irresponsible to declare an individual the winner when all the information has not yet been released. We know for sure that the information so far released by the TE lacks the foundations to give an opinion due to the relative importance of certain provinces and electoral districts in terms of number of voters. Thus, I believe in a country where an urban, suburban, or rural vote is relatively significant because of the many interests of its sectors.

I refuse to say that this or that slate won in Chiriqui, Veraguas, or any other province. We will accept the TE results when all votes have been counted. We will also subject our approval, as far as the results are concerned, to the honest and fair counting of votes for legislative, mayoral, corregimiento representative, and councilmen candidates. I repeat: About 48 to 50 percent has to be taken into account properly. These votes represent an enormous difference for the future of our country.

As I said before, those who are here with me and those who are running with me are the most capable people. Our plans are the best ones. We also offer the best options for legislators, mayors, and corregimiento representatives. I refuse to say that a specific person is the winner, because giving opinions on a process that is still incomplete would be absurd.

Regardless of the results, the country will have as a future reference the fact that we offered the most capable people to rule. Those of us who will stay here because we live here and who have fought for justice and democracy now have the authority to become the opposition. [applause]

Change '94's Quijano on Election

PA0905053794 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 0339 GMT 9 May 94

[Interview with Guillermo Quijano, vice presidential candidate for Change '94 coalition, by Axel Rivera at the coalition's campaign headquarters in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Rivera] Mr. Quijano, will you tell us how you feel about this process. How are your spirits?

[Quijano] First, I want to say one can say the process has been clean, clear, precise. The Electoral Tribunal has shown great honesty in this electoral process, something of which all Panamanians should truly feel proud. I hope Panama will continue to hold elections such as today's.

Regarding vote counts, I believe these results include approximately 40 percent of the cast votes. What we do not have is an idea of what sectors these results cover. In the particular case of Panama City's, I believe we have results from sector 8-7, partial results for 8-6, but I do not know whether there have been any results for 8-8 and 8-9, where Change '94 held much hope. The same goes for the interior of Panama Province—western Panama, sectors 8- 1, 8-2, 8-3, 8-4, and 8-5. This also holds true for the Republic's countryside. Information has been released on the provinces' urban areas and not from the rural sectors. We will have to wait another hour or so until we have a higher percentage of results to allow us to announce some kind of decision.

[Rivera] Can we interpret that you still believe Professor Carles' trend may continue to increase?

[Quijano] It is possible rural sectors and other Panama Province sectors may begin to make a difference in the final result. It is too early to make any prediction. What viewers can be sure of is that if Change '94 is not the winner we will recognize the victor, because up to now the elections and vote count have been clean and honest.

[Rivera] Even if the PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party] is the winner?

[Quijano] No matter who the winner is. I believe the only way Panama can grow politically is by having those who lose recognize the triumph of the winners. If we win, we also hope the PRD recognizes our victory.

[Rivera] The latest provincial figures indicate that Professor Carles lost in Cocle Province, his home province. How do you explain this?

[Quijano] The reason is that the only votes counted so far are from the urban sectors of Penonome and Aguadulce, where most of the voters are public workers and where a high percentage belong to the PRD and another high percentage belong to the Arnulfist Party. We now have to reach into the countryside, Toabre, Tambo, El Roble, all rural sectors in Cocle Province, where we are strong.

PDC Candidate Accepts PRD Victory

PA0905022194 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 0145 GMT 9 May 94

[Interview with Eduardo Vallarino, presidential candidate for Christian Democratic Party, PDC, by unidentified reporter on 8 May; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] For several hours, we have been reporting on this electoral process, which represents an important landmark in Panama's political history. Mr. Eduardo Vallarino, now that several hours have passed since the end of the elections, we would like to hear what you have to say about the election results.

[Vallarino] Panama's elections have been extremely pure and transparent, very civic, very enthusiastic. Panama is the winner in these elections. It is evident that we did not fare as well as we would have desired. Panama has attained a great victory, however.

[Reporter] What message do you have for the Panamanian people, although the final results are not yet known?

[Vallarino] I think the results are indeed known. They are determined by a number of factors which I think are irreversible. Although the official results are not yet known, it is clear that the Democratic Revolutionary Party [PRD] won the elections and that Perez Balladares has won the right to become president. What message do I have for the Panamanian people? Simple: We will have a new president, elected by a considerable number of Panamanians and whom we all must support. We will become the opposition, a responsible one.

[Reporter] We have talked with Christian Democratic Party candidate Eduardo Vallarino.

PDC's Vallarino Acknowledges Defeat

PA0905074494 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 0519 GMT 9 May 94

[Interview with Eduardo Vallarino, Christian Democratic Party, PDC, presidential candidate, and Rene Orillac, PDC first vice presidential candidate, by Lucy Molinar at the Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Molinar] At this time, we are here with one of the presidential candidates and his first vice president. Mr. Eduardo Vallarino just arrived a few minutes ago at the Atlapa Convention Center, and we would appreciate hearing his first statements, as well as those of his first vice presidential candidate Rene Orillac. Mr. Vallarino, it would seem that the initial results will remain unchanged despite the optimism you expressed earlier. What can you now say to the country?

[Vallarino] Well, at this time I can say that I would like to congratulate the country. I congratulate the country because the elections have been a significant accomplishment for Panama. It has been possible to present Panama's positive image to the world, as I have said on several occasions. I would also like to say that, according to the results disclosed by the Electoral Tribunal and what we have been receiving throughout the country from our own party, we are completely certain that Mr. Ernesto Perez Balladares is the winner. He is the president-elect of the Republic, and we publicly extend our congratulations.

[Molinar] Mr. Vallarino, can we take a look backwards, or would you just like to look to the future?

[Vallarino] As you wish, forward or backwards [words indistinct].

[Molinar] Then let's do both. Some time ago there was talk about the possibility of an alliance, because it was impossible for you to proceed on your own. You have seen that you received less than 5 percent of the votes. Why then maintain the alliance? [as heard]

[Vallarino] This alliance did not come about because of our doing. We tried everything to create an alliance to present a better offer to the country, which meant an alliance. On two or three occasions, I publicly said I was willing to give up my candidacy, to decline my candidacy....

[Molinar, interrupting] Was that a genuine offer or just....

[Vallarino, interrupting] Of course it was a genuine offer, we never aimed to mislead.... [pauses] I do not accept your questioning my statements.

[Molinar] No, I am only asking, Mr. Vallarino.

[Vallarino] Okay, let's take it easy. Our offer was a real offer. I am not lying. It is absolutely true. If the alliance did not come about, is it simply because there was no similar willingness from the others.

[Molinar] Mr. Vallarino, on the other hand, thinking now of what will take place in the future. Since I believe your party will now become an opposition party, what type of political position will the PDC adopt?

[Vallarino] That is a decision to be made by the party's political committee. You are once again putting words in my mouth.

[Molinar] I am not putting any words in your mouth, I am simply asking what position your party will adopt.

[Vallarino] Please do no attempt to put words in my mouth....

[Molinar, interrupting] I am simply asking what position the PDC will adopt from here on.

[Vallarino] That is a decision that will be made by the PDC Political Committee.

[Molinar] Mr. Orillac, how do you feel at this time?

[Orillac] I feel quite satisfied, having participated in an election process that has demonstrated that we Panamanians are also capable of doing positive things. This election process has been positive for all. It has been crystal clear, and the result is clear. The message to the world is that Panama can do positive things.

[Vallarino] If the trend witnessed so far continues and the PRD [Revolutionary Democratic Party] emerges as the winner, what can you say about the possibility of some PDC members becoming part of the government they plan to form?

[Orillac] Well, I believe that will be a decision to be made by the party in due time. The party's political committee will have to meet and evaluate the possibility. At this time, we do not rule it out or acknowledge it.

[Molinar] Thank you very much, Mr. Orillac.

Lewis Galindo Views Electoral Process

PA0905033794 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 0121 GMT 9 May 94

[Interview with Samuel Lewis Galindo, presidential candidate of the Solidarity Party, by unidentified reporter at Solidarity Party headquarters in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Reporter] Here we are at the Solidarity Party headquarters to interview Samuel Lewis Galindo, Solidarity Party and National Unity Mission [MUN] presidential candidate. Mr. Sammy, we already have the partial results of these presidential elections; what do you think about them? What is your first impression?

[Lewis] I believe there is a seemingly clear trend favoring Ernesto Perez Balladares of the Democratic Revolutionary Party; however, as far as I know, the Electoral Tribunal [TE] has not yet released any official figures. Let us wait for some tangible information to ensure that we can conduct a final evaluation of the election results. It seems that the trend is indeed favoring Ernesto Perez Balladares.

[Reporter] The TE magistrates have reported that the process seems to have evolved smoothly. Has any candidate of your party or of the MUN complained? Have you heard anyone complaining?

[Lewis] We do not have any significant complaints, because the electoral process evolved normally. This situation must make all Panamanians proud, because we are displaying a great sense of civic responsibility. We have wisely exercised the right that democracy bestows upon us. This is indeed strengthening the incipient democracy we Panamanians have.

[Reporter] Are you going to promote consensus with all political parties regardless of who is elected president?

[Lewis] I will extend my warmest congratulations to the candidate elected through popular vote, because all Panamanians must join the winner and support him to ensure that we reach a consensus that could not have materialized before the elections. I trust that whoever the winner is, he will honor his commitments, because all the candidates talked about national consensus. I repeat, we hope the winner will honor his commitments to the Panamanian people.

[Reporter] Thank you very much. This was Solidarity Party presidential candidate Samuel Lewis Galindo from his party headquarters. He has been following the elections through Telemetro Television Network.

Further on Lewis Galindo Remarks

PA0905042094 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 0311 GMT 9 May 94

[Interview with Samuel Lewis Galindo, presidential candidate of the Solidarity Party, by unidentified reporter at the Solidarity Party headquarters in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Reporter] Here we are the headquarters of the Solidarity Party, which is part of the National Accord Alliance, which along with the National Unity Movement [MUN] nominated Samuel Lewis Galindo as their presidential candidate. Mr. Lewis Galindo, the Electoral Tribunal [TE] has already released unofficial results. According to TE results, as 35 percent of the votes has already been counted, you are in sixth place. In view of this situation, what are your first impressions?

[Lewis] Undoubtedly, there is a clear trend favoring Ernesto Perez Balladares; should this trend continue, he virtually will become the next president of Panama.

[Lewis] You were always optimistic as the polls were being conducted. At times, you even said you were going to give the country a surprise. What do you have to say now?

[Lewis] Simply put, I failed to surprise the country.

[Reporter] What information have you received at the party level?

[Lewis] The information we have corresponds to or goes beyond that of the TE. I currently believe that the percentage margin of difference between the votes for Perez Balladares and Mireya de Gruber will continue.

[Reporter] According to the figures you have here in your party's headquarters, what will the percentage difference between the two candidates be?

[Lewis] I believe their difference will fall between 8 and 10 percent.

[Reporter] Finally, you always said you were interested in participating in another government should you fail to be elected. Do you still think so?

[Lewis] I believe it is too trivial to say that I am interested in participating in another government; I have no interest in being a member of another government. I have said it would be favorable for the country if whoever reaches the presidency calls for a national consensus. This does not mean that one is part of the government; it means one agrees with a national development plan; that is, one must support some issues that go beyond the interests of one's party. For instance, we want to fight unemployment; we want to address the foreign debt; we want to coordinate how to manage the Panama Canal and its surrounding areas. In short, there are positions that go beyond the interests of any political party. All Panamanians must heed the call made by whoever reaches the presidency. This is something completely different from what you just asked me.

[Reporter] Would you care if the Democratic Revolutionary Party [PRD] reaches the presidency?

[Lewis] Why should I care if the PRD wins? Should the sovereign people choose the PRD as the country's next government, I believe we all must accept their decision. We fought so hard to have a democracy, and we must now respect the ruling of democracy; we must accept the sovereign resolve of these people.

[Reporter] Should the situation be different, would you remain in the political arena or would you attend other activities?

[Lewis] I believe we have achieved many things in these elections. In a year and a half, we have founded a party, which will be more solid than ever, because it has already experienced an electoral campaign. The party will be strengthened by its large representation in the many electoral organizations. That is, we will have a large number of legislators and corregimiento representatives. The party will be well represented.

[Reporter] We are grateful that Samuel Lewis Galindo spoke to us.

Lewis Galindo Acknowledges PRD Victory

PA0905053494 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 0430 GMT 9 May 94

[News conference by Samuel Lewis Galindo and Ernesto Perez Balladares, presidential candidates of the National Accord Alliance and the Democratic Revolutionary Party, PRD, respectively, with unidentified reporters at PRD headquarters in Panama City; broadcast in progress—live]

[Text] [Lewis Galindo] ...all of us, the six losing candidates, have won because we contributed to raising the civic level of Panamanian politics and, through our efforts, we have strengthened the incipient Panamanian democracy. It is now up to Dr. Perez Balladares to reinforce this democracy and set in the future an example similar to the one set by President Endara, for whom I publicly express appreciation.

[Perez Balladares] I also wish to join Mr. Galindo in this recognition because it is reality and represents truth. We have held very pure elections in Panama, despite some minor incidents. I acknowledge President Endara's efforts. I also make a public pledge that the 1999 elections will be at least this honest. I will not intervene in the 1999 elections. The Panamanian people can rest assured that on 1 September 1999 I will hand over office to whoever wins the elections. In the next five years, we expect to improve democracy in Panama, which starts today.

[Reporter] Mr. Lewis Galindo, do you acknowledge Dr. Perez Balladares' victory?

[Lewis Galindo] Definitely. Our reports, which are ahead of the Electoral Tribunal's results, indicate that Dr. Perez Balladares has won by a wide margin. For this reason, I have come to congratulate him in the name of my party.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Perez Balladares] The same message we have been transmitting throughout our campaign. It is a message of reconciliation, of national unity, the message that 8 May, election day, will be over in a few minutes. When this day is over, we will turn a glorious page with the beginning of a participative democracy, which we all now pledge to perfect. In addition, I am inviting all of my adversaries to unite with us in a single purpose so we can attain the national objectives, for which we intend to struggle in the next five years.

[Lewis Galindo] I am very pleased by Dr. Perez Balladares' remarks on the day of his victory. This reassures the Panamanian people that all of the electoral promises made by the now victorious candidate will be fulfilled. The Panamanian people should be pleased with this and should stay alert to make sure he keeps his word.

[Perez Balladares] I would like to add something else, which I think is very important. As we have said before, our government will be one without hatred or resentment, without revenge or grudges, without a return to the past, but with its eyes set on the future for our young people and children. Thanks. [applause]

Foreign Minister Mulino Assesses Elections

PA0905004194 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 2235 GMT 8 May 94

[Interview with Foreign Minister Jose Raul Mulino by Jenia Nenzen at the Telemetro Television studios in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Nenzen] Thousands of international observers from all over the world have arrived in our country to closely follow this historic electoral process. Foreign Minister Jose Raul Mulino is here to talk a bit about this. We welcome him to our studios on 50th Street.

[Mulino] Thank you.

[Nenzen] Mr. Foreign Minister, you have had very close contacts with the international observers who arrived in our country. What were their expectations of this electoral process before arriving in Panama?

[Mulino] Yes, Jenia. I have talked with many international observers from different groups and with different levels of importance in recent days. When they came to Panama they thought they would find things that are quite different from what they actually found. They thought they would find a difficult electoral process with some degree of violence; and they had doubts about how things would go; but many of them were able to witness how the different candidates ended their campaigns. Likewise, they have talked with many Panamanians from different political groups; and all of them, without exception, coincide on various issues.

First of all, there has been a very high voter turnout. This was something we were able to confirm today at the different polling places. Second, the honesty with which this process has been carried out and the way the elections have ended today without any doubts. People have participated; they have voted; no one was afraid of being insulted or having their vote ridiculed. Moreover, the confidence that the different political groups have given the Electoral Tribunal has been reasserted by all the candidates and all the political parties. I believe that, as Panamanians, we should feel quite satisfied. We should feel quite pleased with the high degree of maturity we have demonstrated up to this point in an electoral campaign that everyone foresaw as being much more difficult than it has been.

Furthermore, it is important to emphasize, and I am pleased about this as foreign minister of the Republic, that our country behaved marvelously in the eyes of the world, meaning as a country that has matured; a country in which citizens have civically exercised their rights; and, above all, a country that has decided—because the polling places have already closed—to elect its leaders with freedom, without fear. This is quite different from what we experienced in 1989.

In addition, I think it is important to emphasize and acknowledge the role of those who deserve it. First of all, the three Electoral Tribunal magistrates and the organization they have led. I think the country can sleep peacefully tonight after its hard work. Second, the pledge acquired and fulfilled until now and, I am sure, until the end of the process, by the president of the Republic. I think his figure and name will go down in history as the president who respected the people's will; and as the president of the Republic who, after many decades, lead an electoral process without flaws, without doubts. I am sure he will turn over power on 1 September, as he has said on many occasions, to whoever the Panamanian people elect today.

[Nenzen] Does this mean you believe the honesty of this electoral process will help counter the international criticism of our country? Do you think this criticism will be eclipsed by the honesty of this electoral process, which has been truly historic? Is this what the international observers will report to their respective countries?

[Mulino] That is right. In fact, I have asked them to do so, not only in my role as foreign minister but also as a Panamanian. The main results of their work should be that tomorrow they tell the world, without beating around the bush and with realism, what they have seen and what they have observed in these elections. I believe this will tremendously help to favorably and positively depict Panama at the world level. Obviously, as we conclude our term, we also see with great pleasure how we leave Panama—once more in harmony with other free nations; without diplomatic or political problems with any country in the world; and, above all, respected, because we have consistently stated and implemented the democratic principles of liberty and respect for human rights that we have professed in our various efforts throughout the world.

[Nenzen] To conclude, Mr. Foreign Minister, what message do you send the community in general? There are observers in Panama; the eyes of the world are on our country. What should the people's behavior be when the winner is announced?

[Mulino] I think that is the culmination of this entire process. When the Electoral Tribunal announces who has won the elections, the six losers must immediately go and congratulate—without problems—the candidate who won. I believe this will confirm Panamanian democracy and, evidently, when the new president of the Republic is sworn in for the next five-year constitutional term on 1 September, he is duty bound to lead the country democratically. I think this is what the Panamanians, regardless of the electoral preference they exercised today, will demand from the next president. He must lead the country with the same degree of liberty and the same sense of democracy that President Guillermo Endara has done in this harsh, complex, and many times misunderstood political transition.

[Nenzen] Yes. The next president of the Republic, the 53d president, must maintain and improve our country's international image, aside from meeting most of our people's needs.

[Mulino] That is correct.

Vice President Praises Election, Urges Calm

PA0905070894 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 0529 GMT 9 May 94

[Report on interview with Vice President Guillermo Ford by unidentified reporter on 8 May; place not given—recorded]

[Text] The people's decision is final, according to Vice President Guillermo Ford. Panamanians must respect the people's decision.

[Begin recording] [Ford] The elections have been a model of civility and have displayed a great sense of homeland. The international community should respect the Panamanian people. Most important now are the results and the Panamanian people abiding by the majority of the Panamanian people's will.

[Reporter] Do you think the political parties will accept the people's decision?

[Ford] All of the parties and all of us politicians must abide by the National Vote-Counting Board's decision, which I am sure will be endorsed by the various officials of the Catholic Church, as well as by international observers. The question is not whether we wish to accept the decision of the majority of the Panamanian people—we must.

[Reporter] What do you think about the young people who have gone out into the streets, each in his own party's name, to celebrate?

[Ford] Inasmuch as it is celebration, I praise it; nevertheless, I hope such a celebration will not lead them to a confrontation, because we will not permit that. I am asking the young people and every Panamanian citizen to behave themselves. Let's wait for the final results to decide the next Panamanian president. [end recording]

Possible Perez Balladares Cabinet Ministers Listed

PA0905073394 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA (EXTRA Edition) in Spanish 8 May 94 p A-1

[Report by James Aparicio]

[Text] Panamanian President-elect Ernesto Perez Balladares has revealed that the Ministries of the Presidency, Education, Agricultural Development, Health, and Foreign Relations, as well as the posts of comptroller general and attorney general, will be offered to political figures who do not belong to the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD).

In an exclusive statement to LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA Perez Balladares said that PRD members might occupy the Ministries of Housing, Public Works, Labor, Commerce and Industry, Planning, and Government and Justice.

Current Electoral Tribunal Magistrates Eduardo Valdes, Dennis Allen, and Guillermo Marquez will remain in their posts, since they are considered responsible for the holding of the most important elections ever in Panama's political history.

Sources told LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA that Jose de los Santos Chen Barria, a member of the opposition Christian Democratic Party, might be ratified as comptroller general, and Oswaldo Fernandez might be retained as director of the National Police if he is not ratified as a Supreme Court justice.

Perez Balladares refused to confirm this possibility, however. An investigation by LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA revealed that the Foreign Ministry might be offered to industrialist Gabriel Lewis Galindo; the Education Ministry to Stanley Muschett, president of the Justice and Peace Commission; the Agricultural Development Ministry to Carlos Souza Lennox, former president of ANAGAN [National Cattlemen's Association]; the Presidency Ministry to Raul Arango Gasteazoro; the Health Ministry to Carlos Garcia de Paredes; and the Commerce and Industry Ministry to Felix Gonzalez, a PRD leader in Chiriqui Province. [as published]

PRD Under Secretary General Mitchel Doens might be appointed government and justice minister, and Christian Democratic legislator Jose Antonio Sossa might be appointed attorney general.

Two women will be appointed to cabinet posts in the Labor and Planning Ministries, but Perez Balladares did not reveal their names.

Argentina

Deputy Foreign Minister Petrella Interviewed

PY0605123894 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 24 Apr 94 pp D14-D16

[Interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Fernando Petrella by Mauricio Carvallo in Buenos Aires—date not given]

[Excerpts] [Carvallo] Would you say that the [Falklands] islands will belong to Argentine again before the year 2000?

[Petrella] I believe that during the past few years, we have witnessed more dramatic changes in the world than actual possibilities that Great Britain will transfer the Malvinas Islands' sovereignty to Argentina. We have the examples of South Africa, the Middle East, the changes taking place in Russia, in the former Yugoslavia. The changes the world is experiencing are so unpredictable and fast that something like that could happen.

Argentina does not want to rush things, however. Since 1983 and 1990, when relations with Great Britain were restored and, especially, with President Carlos Menem's administration and the implementation of Domingo Cavallo and Guido Di Tella's foreign policy, what has changed is our concern over the islanders' interests. In the past, this aspect was not taken into account as much as it is now.

[Carvallo] In what sense?

[Petrella] Democratic Argentina realizes that the islanders have their own identity, that the islands' society is no longer the pastoral nor isolated society it was before 1982. To a certain degree, the war, with all its terrible aspects, brought an economic well-being the islanders did not enjoy before. These facts must be taken into account in a negotiation. In fact, during all our meetings with the British and the islanders, we have fully respected their interests. We believe the islands will gradually grow closer to us through dialogue and the fact that Argentina continues to grow and is predictable from the political viewpoint. In addition, the Southern Cone offers a climate of harmony, cooperation, friendship, and firmness regarding our claim.

[Carvallo] But are the islanders aware of that?

[Petrella] There are concrete signs that lead us to believe that our policy has prompted a debate on the islands. If you read the PENGUIN NEWS (local daily) as carefully as we do, you will notice that the islanders discuss a relationship with Argentina. Naturally, it is not always fully positive. They argue and say rude things about us, but at least we are again a subject of their discussions on the future of the islands, in which Argentina is always mentioned. [passage omitted]

[Carvallo] Can you assure that Argentine will never again resort to the use of force?

[Petrella] Definitely. First, because it is not ethical; Second, because it does not generate solutions; and third, because we appreciate and need our relationship with Great Britain and Europe, which is almost the same thing. These are three very pragmatic and clear reasons that are by no means idealistic. When we talk about ethics we are not talking about idealism. We are talking about something very sound and very special: force does not yield solutions. It is a 'boomerang' because in the long run it would affect our relationship with Great Britain and Europe. Only recently, Argentina overcame the U.S. and European embargo that followed the war. This problem has still not been solved with Great Britain who still refuses to sell us spare parts and military equipment. This is very complicated because most of Argentina's military equipment, traditionally was British. [passage omitted]

[Carvallo] It has been said that the islands have about 50 percent more oil than what Great Britain can extract from the North Sea...

[Petrella] The two companies that have prospected for oil, with the purpose of finding someone interested in buying their study, might say that. No one has bought that study although the British say a phantom Argentine enterprise did but I do not know for sure.

Argentina does not want to hasten a debate that not only has an ecological aspect but also a very important personal aspect. Everyone knows that it takes a lot of people to exploit a single oil well and this will definitely change the islanders way of life which we consider sacred and something that must be preserved. [passage omitted]

[Carvallo] It is quite surprising that Argentina, through you, should say that it is not particularly interested in any oil there might be on the islands...

[Petrella] I am not making an official statement. It is a comment to a journalist who works for EL MERCURIO, from Chile, a friendly country... I am telling a friend that Argentina could not care less about the oil on the Malvinas because it has plenty of its own and because the oil price is not going to increase. When Russia floods the world with its oil, a very strict cartel will have to be created to prevent prices from dropping.

[Carvallo] Some believed oil could cause new tensions in the South Atlantic.

[Petrella] Between 1971 and 1982 we gave oil to the islands. Therefore, oil is not the problem, the problem has to do with the jurisdictional and legal aspects of the UK's unilateral exploration and exploitation in the Malvinas. This territory is in dispute and we cannot remain indifferent to unilateral actions. This is why we are seeking cooperation.

[Carvallo] To define sovereignty?

[Petrella] That is the question. We must generate a common space. We have already made a clear proposal regarding the oil to a high-ranking official. We proposed

creating a joint authority to assign exploitation areas according to a practical criteria. All this must be done under the sovereignty "umbrella" that was created to enable these moves without either of the two parties acquiring better accumulated rights.

[Carvallo] In the meantime, Argentina is telling oil companies that it will oppose oil exploitation without its approval.

[Petrella] Of course. We have told them that any investment will encounter legal problems..., but I cannot say what we are going to do. We are warning the companies that this territory is in dispute, when there are so many other places in the world... We cannot or should not approve the exploration and exploitation of resources in these areas until that dispute has been settled or until the involved parties have agreed to tolerate each other. [passage omitted]

[Carvallo] Islands Governor David Tatham said to me: Why so much interest in a joint oil exploitation with Argentina when there is also Chile, Uruguay, and Brazil. What would your ministry say about this?

[Petrella] The dispute is with Argentina. Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay, as well as the rest of the countries of the hemisphere, have recognized our rights. The UK could, obviously, contact whichever country it wished if a dispute, recognized by the United Nations, did not exist.

[Carvallo] What do you expect from Chile then?

[Petrella] Solidarity. That contact with the islands be made considering Argentine interests in any negotiation. That Chile maintain the magnificent commitment undertaken by President Patricio Aylwin to back our rights. We regard this as one of Chile's greatest acts of friendship throughout our common history.

One of the main objectives of President Menem's foreign policy, implemented by Foreign Minister Di Tella, has been to maintain the best and most cordial relationship with Chile. And this not only because of cultural reasons but for economic and strategic reasons.

[Carvallo] Chile, however, is in the uncomfortable position that whatever it does may affect its optimum relationship with the two countries in dispute.

[Petrella] Argentina's stance on the UK has been to say that it must play a constructive role in the Southern Cone. In other words, it can no longer speculate on differences between Argentina and Chile, as in the past when some were more obvious than others, because there was usually mutual distrust. This must no longer exist. Argentine-Chilean integration must progress.

This is why any British Government gesture that may affect the Argentine-Chilean relationship is considered discouraging in Argentina. We have told the British this many times and we are certain we have the support of the Chilean Government.

[Carvallo] What has Great Britain done lately regarding Chile that may discourage Argentina?

[Petrella] There were three episodes. One was the British Government invitation to Chilean legislators to visit the Malvinas. This, in itself is not especially sensitive but the second episode—proposing that they set up a Chilean consulate on the islands—is. That would really be complicated. The third—the donation of an aircraft—is obviously a symbol of the conflict. Since Argentina overcame the conflict, it caused no more problems but many believe the British should have known the effect this could have caused. Anyway, the Argentine-Chilean friendship is very strong now. [passage omitted]

[Carvallo] Argentina and Chile also have their own territorial conflicts. What outcome due you expect from the controversy over Laguna del Desierto?

[Petrella] We hope our representatives will be able to convince the arbitrators of our rights. I believe, with all due respect for Chile and the arbitrators, that our attorneys have good grounds and are eloquent enough to explain them.

[Carvallo] Chile has grounds, probably even better ones. Therefore, how sure can Chileans be that Argentina will not declare any ruling on Laguna del Desierto not in its favor null?

[Petrella] Today's Argentina is not the Argentina of the past. Nor is the current relationship between Chile and Argentina the same as in the past. I think this answers your question.

Bolivia

COB, Government Sign Agreement To End Strikes

PA0705190394 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1629 GMT 7 May 94

[Text] La Paz, 7 May (EFE)—Today, the Bolivian Labor Federation (COB) and the government signed an agreement to end several weeks of stoppages, hunger strikes, violent demonstrations, military deployments in the streets, and roadblocks on all the country's highways. The COB, however, did not want to include the government's last wage offer, which the COB considered unsatisfactory, in the signed agreement.

The government's pledges not to raise the price of fuel and to guarantee job stability for public employees are among the highlights of the agreement signed early this morning. The government also pledged to build 10,000 "social interest" housing units for low-income families. In exchange, the COB set aside all pressure tactics, which have paralyzed the country for several weeks and placed it on the brink of a state of siege.

As for the wage demands, the government offered to raise the national minimum wage from 160 bolivianos a month ($34) to 190 bolivianos ($41). It also offered a

12-percent raise to health workers and teachers, a 9-percent raise for those earning less than 1,000 bolivianos a month ($216), and a 6-percent raise for those earning more than that. The COB turned down those proposals as its wage demand is based on a national minimum wage of 400 bolivianos ($86) a month. The average wage for teachers, for example, is currently 350 bolivianos a month ($75). The government plans to implement the new salary rates even though the COB turned down the wage offer. At the conclusion of negotiations with the government, the COB warned that a new social conflict may flare up in a few days over the education reform bill.

Peasant Believed Killed in 2 May Strike Appears

PY0605213794 La Paz Radio Fides Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 6 May 94

[Report by correspondent Victor Zuleta from Potosi—live]

[Excerpts] Peasant Francisco Cruz Talavera, who was believed to be dead, came forth yesterday afternoon to explain that he had been mistaken for the person who was taken to the local morgue on 2 May. As is known, Potosi peasant federation leaders first insisted that the dead person was Francisco Cruz, whose name was among those who were reported missing on 30 April. Francisco Cruz's relatives and friends were confused by the features of the face and body of the remains that were found. [passage omitted]

Dozens of people insisted that they could recognize the body as belonging to Cruz, as there was an extraordinary resemblance between our fellow journalist and the features of the body that was found. In view of this reasonable piece of evidence, the mass media reported Cruz's supposed death.

In his first statement, Cruz said he had been at the site of the roadblock until they were forced into the hills of (Ocoruru) on 30 October. He said he decided to leave for (Pisuri), his home town, because of security reasons and because his wife was about to give birth to their seventh child.

In view of persistent reports of his death, Cruz decided to leave for Potosi at dawn yesterday, marching along with others who cheered him. Radio [name indistinct], which like other media reported Cruz's death, considered it necessary to issue a bulletin which in its main points reads: We have been able to ascertain that Francisco Cruz is alive, and that he is in Potosi to clarify reports disseminated by the mass media. In view of this, and as we have publicly expressed our firm willingness to help achieve peace in the country, we are hereby issuing this explanation so that the truth can prevail, in compliance with the teachings of the gospel that the truth will make us free. [passage omitted]

Chile

Figueroa: U.S. Made No Environmental Demands

PY0605120394 Santiago LA TERCERA DE LA HORA in Spanish 29 Apr 94 p 2

[Article by Patricia Escalona]

[Excerpt] Yesterday, Foreign Minister Carlos Figueroa said high-ranking U.S. officials, including U.S. State Secretary Warren Christopher and U.S. Trade Representative Michael Kantor, have "openly" expressed their government's interest in negotiating a free trade agreement with Chile.

An official Foreign Ministry note states: "This has been confirmed publicly and unequivocally on several occasions. The only points requiring definition are the methods to be used, the bilateral agreement, membership to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the date to officially begin negotiating."

The foreign minister thus answered a report that an unidentified Foreign Ministry official had mentioned difficulties in the negotiations, or that Chile is not a priority for the United States in the free trade agreement. The mentioned report says, among other things, that the United States has made environmental demands that Chile cannot meet.

Figueroa said: "I want to say that such a report is absolutely false because all the information we gathered through the Foreign Ministry, the public, and through several involved U.S. Government officials, shows that negotiations between Chile and the United States over a free trade treaty or over joining the NAFTA are open and ready to go." [passage omitted]

Governing Parties Back Cuban Cooperation Accord

PY0605122794 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1633 GMT 5 May 94

[Text] Santiago, 5 May (EFE)—The Chilean Government's decision to sign a cooperation agreement with Cuba has been endorsed by the leaders of the governing Coalition of Parties For Democracy. Members of the rightist opposition voiced skepticism.

Yesterday, 4 May, Chilean Foreign Minister Carlos Figueroa Serrano confirmed the government's plan to sign a cooperation agreement with Cuba though he reiterated that an eventual resumption of diplomatic ties with Fidel Castro's government is not on the list of subjects that the Chilean Government will assess in the short term.

Today, Socialist Party President Camilo Escalona said his party "enthusiastically supports" the tightening of friendship and cooperation ties with the Cuban people.

Christian Democratic Party [PDC] President Gutenberg Martinez asserted his party is in favor of cooperating

with Cuba "from a solidarity viewpoint in view of the difficulties the Cuban people are enduring," adding that cooperation "should be granted without imposing any conditions." Martinez also upheld the end of the U.S. economic embargo on the island because, in his opinion, this might encourage the Cuban authorities to implement a greater economic and political domestic opening. Martinez will preside over a PDC delegation that will travel to Cuba this month.

Chilean Communist Party leader Carlos Toro asked Eduardo Frei's government for the immediate normalization of diplomatic relations with Cuba while Radical Party President Senator Anselmo Sule commented that there is a certain degree of cooperation with Cuba.

Sule mentioned a $10 million credit the Chile State Bank recently granted the Cuban Government to finance the purchase of Chilean foodstuff and added that Chile can cooperate with Cuba "in several aspects." Sule said that among the incentives are the activities that some Chilean companies are developing in Cuba, the extension of export credits to that country, and the promotion of social development actions on the island.

The rightist Democratic Independent Union (UDI), voiced its agreement with the establishment of a cooperation program "that does not encourage the perpetuation of the current Cuban regime." UDI Senator Beltran Urenda, member of the Senate's Foreign Commission, believes any aid for Cuba "should seek a change in the Cuba Government, a democratic opening." He said "any support" that may help Fidel Castro's regime to remain in power "is dangerous."

Carabineros Head: Government Relations 'Normal'

PY0605171194 Santiago LA TERCERA DE LA HORA in Spanish 27 Apr 94 p 6

[Text] Carabineros (Acting) Director General Fernando Cordero has assured that relations between Carabineros and the government are absolutely normal and that it is not possible to say whether there is a winner or a loser.

He made this statement during a rally held to pay tribute to Carabineros martyrs at the memorial on Alameda Avenue corner with Namur Street. Cordero said the tribute is paid every year to dead Carabineros and to Carabineros martyrs. The institution is commemorating its 67th anniversary.

He also confirmed that General Rodolfo Stange did not attend the ceremony and that he is spending his leave in southern Chile. Cordero reiterated that Stange's request for leave without pay for another 60-day period is consistent with a previous decision to facilitate the investigation by the judge probing the so-called slain people case.

Asked about the dinner hosted on 2 May by President Eduardo Frei for the high command, he replied it was a "very pleasant" and "very interesting" meeting, adding that relations between the government and the Carabineros "are appropriate for the government and for a state institution like the Carabineros." He emphasized that relations are absolutely normal. "We must continue to work. There are many things to do," he said.

Asked about the influence of the situation affecting Gen. Stange on the Carabineros, Cordero replied: "The institution, as such, has not been harmed at all. It is a state institution that must continue working." He admitted, however, that "obviously, there have been personal problems, misinterpretation, and things like that, but the institution remains absolutely sound, united and at work, and this is the most important thing."

As to whether the government had "won a confrontation with the Carabineros," Cordero replied that "it is not a point of winning or defeating anyone. We are a state institution at the service of society and we cannot seek to either win or lose against anyone. We are state servants."

Colombia

Constitutional Court Legalizes Personal Drug Use

PA0605154794 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 6 May 94

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"]

[Text] Attention: Tonight, the Constitutional Court declared that so-called personal drug doses are not illegal in Colombia. For example, arrests such as that of Carlos Sosa, who was taken into custody by police for possession of a marijuana joint, will no longer occur. From now on, individuals may legally possess the following amounts for personal consumption: 20 grams of marijuana, 1 gram of cocaine, 5 grams of hashish, and 4 grams of methacholine (metacualona).

Gaviria Decries Court Ruling

PA0605155094 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 6 May 94

[Report on news conference by President Cesar Gaviria before his departure for Venezuela with unidentified reporters on 6 May; place not given; from the "Caracol's 0600 to 0900" newscast—recorded]

[Text] [Announcer] Santa Fe de Bogota—President Cesar Gaviria Trujillo has rejected the legalization of the possession of drugs for personal consumption as ruled by the Constitutional Court. He said the decision may encourage drug addiction. Criticizing the top constitutional court's ruling on the free development of personality [desarrollo de la peronalidad], he said that if this view is to become the norm, it should have been done through a decision by the Congress of the Republic or by referendum. Gaviria added that [words indistinct] implementing this rule, one should study the possibility of amending the Constitution to limit the individual's

right to develop the personality. This is what the president said, noting that he respects the Court ruling but does not agree with it.

[Gaviria] The government will abide by but does not agree with the Constitutional Court's ruling to legalize drug consumption for various reasons. First, the government believes this will encourage an increase in drug consumption in Colombia, thus seriously undermining the tranquillity of the people and family development. It could also significantly increase crime and violence. The government does not believe this issue should become an aspect in the development of the individual's personality. Carrying that view to an extreme may have exceedingly undesirable effects, so I hope the Court will explain this in the ruling to be announced to Colombians in a few days. The Constitutional Court must clarify a number of aspects so Congress can at least regulate them in a statutory law. This must not turn into an absolute right because that would lead us to absurd decisions. The Court must make it clear that the use of narcotics by minors and adolescents must be limited or banned at the very least. Also, the Congress, or the Court, should be able to avoid or limit consumption in schools and universities. I would also say that the Court should make it clear....[pauses] It should at least give Congress the option of banning drug consumption in public places. If possible, it must also ban drug consumption by women who are pregnant or nursing. The free development of personality ought not lead to babies with birth defects caused by drug consumption. We must not say that we cannot control such things on account of the principle of development of the personality. That would lead to absurd situations.

It must also be clear that drivers or pilots cannot take drugs. No one could live in this society if that were allowed on the grounds that it is personality development. As president, I would say that free development of the personality cannot mean that Colombia is unable to campaign against drug abuse because that would hamper the development of the personality. We would become a society that regards drug consumption as desirable and advisable. We may almost have to encourage it, something that greatly disturbs the government. The government has taken other considerations into account. True, some U.S. states and European countries have legalized drug consumption. Those decisions, however, have had controversial results. I understand that consumption has increased in the countries where drugs have been legalized.

Aside from that, the legislatures have made those decisions following a very broad public debate. I do not know if countries or states allow the personal use of hard drugs like cocaine. I do not have that information. I have not heard of that because the extremely high level of addiction makes us quickly realize that it is not a matter of personality development but of a simple addiction or illness. If we turn this into a personality development issue, that means we cannot force people to undergo treatment. I do not know of any country in the world that has reached that extreme.

I return to the same point. I think the ruling must allow Congress to pass a law governing all these aspects. I would also say that the countries that have taken these steps, as I said before, did so after a broad discussion and based on a political decision made by Congress or the citizens. I think that if this option were to be pursued, it would have to be discussed by Congress or made by decision of the citizens in a popular consultation.

I would even understand if the Court stated that this cannot be considered an offense or violation, but Congress' authority to make decisions of this type in a governing law must be preserved. If that is not possible, I hope the Court's ruling will allow Congress to establish restrictions on all I have said. I would go even further. I think this possibility must be examined in case it is decided that the state will be unable to establish those restrictions. We would then have to think about amending the Constitution to place limitations on the right of autonomy and the development of personality. We could even ask citizens in the near future if they agree with a change of this nature in the Constitution by way of a referendum.

As time goes by, I hope to say more about this issue. I really hope the Constitutionality Court will clearly establish that no abuses will be committed and that limitations will be established within this decision, with which the government does not agree. As I said before, I, as head of the government, will abide by this ruling as we are mandated to abide by the Constitutionality Court's rulings. I believe, however, that the promulgation of this law as the development of individual personality could have serious and dangerous implications for Colombian society. [Words indistinct] I hope the Court's ruling at least allows Congress, through a governing law, to place a series of limitations on that decision by the Court. Otherwise, there may be very grave implications for this society.

[Reporter] Mr. President, will the government take immediate action to overcome this impasse, taking advantage of the state of internal disturbance?

[Gaviria] No, no, no. We are not going to resort to the state of internal disturbance to respond to a Constitutionality Court ruling. We are forced to wait for the Constitutionality Court's ruling to analyze its scope and implications. Only then will we decide what to do regarding limitations on said decision. We hope we can resort to Congress to establish something that the Constitution and the very Court rulings have established; that is, that the law have reasonable limitations. We are living in a state of law, so it must be possible. I cannot imagine the Court granting the absolute right to consume drugs in Colombia. This could also lead to unreasonable situations.

If no limitations are set, it is possible that suicide and even abortion could be legalized. No! Personality development has clear limitations. In Colombia and all civilized societies, there are limitations. The Court has declared legal mayoral decrees establishing limitations on alcohol consumption, so I cannot understand how the Court deems it reasonable to establish limitations on alcohol consumption but not on drug consumption. I go back to another absurd point, which I hope the Constitutional Court ruling will clarify. This may mean that medical prescriptions for drug consumption cannot be written because they limit the development of personality, and people have the right to consume any drug with any number of effects. This is incorrect, and I hope the Court clearly establishes the capacity and right of society to set limitations in this instance.

[Reporter] Mr. President, could the Court ruling, at some point, support the prosecutor general's proposal to legalize drugs and [words indistinct] international level?

[Gaviria] I cannot answer that question. You would have to ask the prosecutor general directly. You would have to ask him if the elimination of sanctions on drug use is part of his proposal or if he believes the legalization issues must be studied further. Only the prosecutor general can answer those questions.

[Reporter] The U.S. Government protested Colombia's decision on the media. Is there any official statement on that yet?

[Gaviria] No, I think it is irrelevant. It is a domestic matter. I was not talking about international consequences, and I am not going to. I think we must discuss this here and now as a domestic issue; as a Colombian issue.

Again, I sincerely appeal to the sensibility and maturity of the Constitutionality Court and hope it does not make this an absolute right. If they do, it could lead us to truly absurd and dangerous situations. I hope we do not go so far as to call this an absolute right of an individual in the development of his or her personality that allows no limitations.

[Reporter] Mr. President, the country's coffee growers have asked the government to study coffee prices on the local market, given that the price on the international market has surpassed the one-dollar mark. Will the government entertain their petition?

[Gaviria] The treasury minister, who is authorized to make such decisions, has the full support of the president and the government and therefore speaks on behalf of the government. He will establish the government's position on this as soon as Jorge Cardenas Gutierrez, president of the National Federation of Colombian Coffee Growers, returns from abroad. Cardenas must first present his report before the federation's National Commission to explain the perspectives and projections in this field, after which the National Commission will discuss the issues. The minister will discuss his position with the coffee growers and the National Commission. They will analyze their options and reach the most beneficial decisions for the federation and for the community in general. I am quite sure that it will be possible to find an agreement with the coffee growers at the National Commission, as we have hundreds of times before.

[Announcer] That was President Cesar Gaviria before leaving for Caracas, Venezuela for a first visit with President Rafael Caldera. This is the president's first meeting after being elected OAS secretary general.

Gaviria, Court President Disagree on Drug Decision

PA0605201094 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 6 May 94

[From the "National Newscast"]

[Text] A veritable powder keg was set off by the Constitutional Court's decision to legalize personal drug use. President Cesar Gaviria Trujillo was the first to express his rejection, stating very strongly that he does not agree with the decision. The Court, in view of the avalanche of criticism by presidential candidates and by the population in general, defended itself by saying that a mountain is being made out of a molehill.

The government and the Constitutional Court had a difference of opinion regarding the impact of the decision to legalize the personal consumption of drugs. The president says it is dangerous, while the Constitutional Court says the government and the Congress have ways to cope with the situation.

[Begin recording] [Gaviria] First, the government believes this will encourage an increase in drug consumption in Colombia, thus seriously undermining the tranquillity of the people and family development. It could also significantly increase crime and violence.

[Constitutional Court President Jorge Arango Mejia] That is a respectable opinion, which I do not share. The Constitutional Court has exercised its legitimate function of interpreting the Constitution. It has determined that a norm is contrary to the Constitution.

[Gaviria] It must also be clear that drivers or pilots cannot take drugs. No one could live in this society if that were allowed on the grounds that it is personality development.

[Arango] Regarding alcohol, a person can imbibe liquor, but he could commit a crime if he infringes upon the rights of another person in a criminal way. [end recording]

Finally, the court president said it was contradictory to authorize personal drug consumption and punishments for it at the same time.

Candidates Support Gaviria on Court Decision

PA0605204294 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 6 May 94

[From the "National Newscast"]

[Text] President Gaviria spoke and other reactions followed. The presidential candidates and the police counternarcotics director support Gaviria and agree that personal consumption should not be legalized.

[Andres Pastrana, presidential candidate of the Conservative Party] I totally disagree with the Constitutional Court because Colombia is invaded by drugs. We are a drug-producing and drug-distributing country. If we open the doors to personal use, it will be like offering incentives to increase drug addiction rates. The laws must be obeyed, but there has been a flaw in the Court. I think we must look for mechanisms that will allow us not to be permissive. That is where we must direct our efforts.

[Unidentified reporter] What are the good and bad aspects of this court decision?

[Pastrana] Personally, I do not see anything good about it.

[Enrique Parejo, presidential candidate for the Democratic National Alternative] I think the Court has made a serious mistake. The decision could lead to a considerable increase in drug use in the country. If running a red light and thereby endangering the lives and physical wellbeing of persons is subject to sanction even if nothing happens, that is all the more reason why the use of drugs should be sanctioned.

[Miguel Maza, presidential candidate of the National Civic Consensus] For me, it is a legal absurdity. It is impossible to conceive of the law as a cold summation of a series of norms that are totally alien from the wishes and feelings of a people. After carefully analyzing the clamor made by mothers, fathers, the clergy, and the government in expressing their opinions, the only thing left for these five magistrates to do is resign. [end recording]

Director, Presidential Hopefuls on Legalization

PA0705015794 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 7 May 94

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"]

[Text] Government, political, and church sectors have expressed opposition to the Constitutional Court's decision to legalize personal doses of certain drugs. The impossible seems to have occurred in Colombia: Everyone agreed on the same issue.

National Drug Director Gabriel Vega, presidential candidates Andres Pastrana [Conservative Party]; Ernesto Samper [Liberal Party]; Antonio Navarro Wolff [19 April Movement Democratic Alliance]; Miguel Maza [National Civic Consensus]; and Episcopal Conference President Monsignor Pedro Rubiano oppose the decision.

[Begin recording] [Vega] I heard the court president say these drugs are similar to alcohol, which is untrue. I asked him how a child of 11, 12, 13, or 14 could make a responsible decision concerning drug use.

[Pastrana] I respect the court's decision, but I disagree with it.

[Samper] The legalization or acceptance of a personal dose in a country such as Colombia, which is known as a producer and where one assumes large quantities of drugs are readily available, constitutes a dangerous step.

[Navarro] I sincerely do not like the decision because it will not resolve the problem and will create a debate that will confuse many.

[Maza] I cannot understand how a court of such importance can manage to pass such a legal atrocity, knowingly, because they must know this: They are creating many ills for Colombia.

[Rubiano] In view of this country's realities and people, we must keep the common good in mind. I wonder what good it can do the country to legalize drugs now. [end recording]

Attorney General Opposes Court's Drug Ruling

PA0705021394 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 7 May 94

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"]

[Text] Attorney General Carlos Gustavo Arrieta's strong opposition to the Constitutional Court's recent decision has apparently weakened the legal arguments supporting the approval of the personal drug dose.

[Begin Arrieta recording] I disagree with the ruling, which I think is capable of creating complex legal, moral, social, and international problems in the country. In terms of the law, such a broad interpretation of personal freedom could create distortions that have no place in this government. We will soon find ourselves debating other social issues, such as euthanasia or suicide. Let us keep in mind that personal freedom cannot be extended to a point at which it harms society. [end recording]

Dissenting Justice Criticizes Drug Ruling

PA0705020494 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 7 May 94

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"]

[Text] The most tumultuous debate in recent times in Colombia was unleashed today after the Constitutional Court decided to legalize the personal consumption of drugs such as marijuana and cocaine. The debate has reached a point that, going against the tradition of not speaking publicly, the Constitutional Court justices who

opposed the decision are expressing their dissent. Here is a report by Juan Roberto Vargas:

[Begin recording] [Vargas] Good evening. We are here with one of the justices who dissented from the majority decision adopted by the Constitutional Court yesterday to decriminalize the consumption of drugs, that is to say, the use of the infamous personal dose of drugs. Dr. Jose Gregorio Hernandez, why did you dissent from this decision?

[Hernandez] I disagree with the decision because I believe the standard, or standards, declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court were, in fact, not unconstitutional. Just the opposite is true. Far from violating the Constitution, they extended it. The advancement of personal freedom [libre desarrollo de la personalidad] has limits within the Constitution. These limits basically involve the well-being of others and the maintenance of juridical order. This is because, to the extent that a person who has consumed drugs acts under the influence of a substance that prevents him from being fully aware of the reality around him, he is capable of causing enormous harm, even committing crimes, which obviously would threaten public interest, harm society, and should therefore be penalized.

[Vargas] Thank you, Dr. Jose Gregorio. We should point out that this is the most significant and controversial decision the Constitutional Court has made. We must remember that the vote was 5-4 among the justices who decided to decriminalize personal drug use. The dissenting justices say this will have serious international repercussions as far as Colombia's image in the fight against drug trafficking is concerned. This will create grave legal problems because it opens the doors to the definite legalization of drug trafficking and will create serious psychiatric and psychological problems among the youths who consume these substances.

Gaviria: Possible Plebiscite for Drug Legalization

PA0805035994 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0130 GMT 8 May 94

[Report by Jorge Enrique Botero from the "AM/PM" Newscast]

[Text] Minutes before leaving for Costa Rica, President Cesar Gaviria held a news conference to reiterate his position on holding a plebiscite to ensure that the people will decide whether to accept or reject the legalization of drugs. Jorge Enrique Botero has the story:

[Begin recording] [Gaviria] The government is more convinced about the possibility of holding a plebiscite.

[Botero] Gaviria unexpectedly commented on the decision by the country's highest constitutional organization.

[Gaviria] Congress or the people should have discussed, analyzed, and voted on a decision such as this one; it should not have been a court decision.

[Botero] Gaviria said he will seek counsel to initiate the plebiscite process.

[Gaviria] We will have to decide along with the Electoral Tribunal and the National Civil Registry Office when to hold the plebiscite.

[Botero] The president added it is unlikely the consultation will be made during the 29 May presidential elections, but he hinted of a possible plebiscite during the runoff elections, should they be necessary. [end recording]

Businessmen Request Plebiscite

PA0705030794 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 7 May 94

[From the "Seven O'Clock News" newscast]

[Text] Colombia's industrialists and businessmen have said a referendum is needed to determine whether minimum doses of drugs for personal consumption should be legalized. Alberto Vasquez Restrepo, president of Colombian Chamber of Construction, spoke on behalf of 14 economic associations.

[Begin Vasquez recording] As we said in a communique sent to the president today, we are absolutely dumbfounded. This decision has really taken the country by surprise and we have asked the president to invoke the constitutional right to consult the people on any subject. This right to a referendum is needed more than ever today, considering that there is no higher body above the Constitutional Court to which this decision can be appealed in order to abolish or modify it. [end recording].

FARC Column Occupies Town in Cundinamarca

PA0805193094 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 8 May 94

[From the "Cripton Newscast"]

[Text] This morning a FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia] column occupied Gachala in Cundinamarca Department. Newswoman Chelo Garcia was at the 13th Brigade's operations center during preparations to counterattack the rebels.

[Begin Garcia recording] The counterinsurgency operations of the 13th Army Brigade's special forces are being coordinated at Huasca military base. These forces are seeking out FARC's 53 group, which occupied Gachala a few hours ago. Official sources reported that the insurgents dynamited four facilities, the Agrarian Fund, and some banks. So far, one policeman is reported dead. This newswoman was unable to reach Gachala because, in addition to the rebels' activities, the place is isolated as the result of a landslide on the road leading to the town. Counterinsurgency reinforcements continue to be dispatched to the area by air. The 13th Brigade commander, General Norberto Agra, is coordinating operations from Santa Fe de Bogota. [end recording]

Army Foils Guerrilla Plot Against Election Process

PA0805200894 Paris AFP in Spanish 1531 GMT 8 May 94

[Text] Medellin, Colombia, 8 May (AFP)—This Saturday in Medellin following the confiscation of explosives and ammunition and the arrest of 12 insurgents, Colombian Army and secret police foiled a guerrilla plot to sabotage the approaching 29 May presidential elections.

The Medellin military command gave the details of this Sunday's joint operation, which they described as effective, against possible sabotage of the electoral process. The command also announced the arrest of the leader of the FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia] Bolivarian Militia's urban group and 11 other rebels.

The operation resulted in the seizure of 200 kg of dynamite, 19 16-caliber cartridges, five rolls of slow-burning fuse, and 882 9-mm bullets during a raid on a house in northeastern Medellin, Colombia's second largest city.

Military sources indicated that operations against FARC groups in the Medellin urban area are directed at preventing disruptions such as those that occurred during the 13 March legislative elections. The same sources also reported that there was significant property damage but no casualties during the March terrorist attacks against political party headquarters and the Venezuelan consulate in Medellin.

This Sunday, the authorities stressed that they intend to continue operations against subversives and explained that the arrest of 12 Bolivarian Militia members and the seizure of war material followed 90 days of investigations and intelligence work.

Authorities Raid Cali Cartel Communications Bases

PA0605171094 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 3 May 94

[From the "National Newscast"]

[Text] The Joint Special Command raided two communications bases of the Cali Cartel a few hours ago, thus it is slowly undermining the cartel's infrastructure. So far this year, 150 people have been arrested and 18 clandestine landing strips destroyed. The latest raids have weakened the cartel's powerful communications system.

The first communications base was raided north of Cali. The Candelaria Limitada brick company was used as a front for the operation. The "National Newscast" has learned that alleged drug trafficker Diego Montoya Sanchez, alias Don Diego, owns the company. The authorities are currently pursuing Montoya. During the raid, the authorities located checking accounts, financial statements, seven hand-held communications radios, battery chargers, and batteries. They also found documents of (Acetel Limitada), another communications company, with the registrations for 20 hand-held radios and permits from the Communications Ministry. The authorities found copies of checks for over 500 million pesos. The Joint Special Command raided a second company, (Compania Conalviver), also north of Cali. The communications center had no permit from the Communications Ministry. The command seized four screens, monitors, communication radios, and other equipment. According to the state's intelligence corps, these communication companies cover the entire Valle del Cauca Department and serve as fronts for the Cali Cartel to make transactions and contact drug traffickers at the service of that cartel.

ANDI President Views Economic Trends

94CA0107A Santa Fe de Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 11 Apr 94 p 7B

[Commentary by Carlos Arturo Angel Arango, president of the National Association of Industrialists, ANDI: "Economic Prospects Are Not Clear"]

[Text] The main forces driving growth are beginning to flag. It will not be easy to achieve results similar to those obtained in '93.

Last year was a good year for the economy, but the positive trend did not extend to all sectors. The foreign trade trend, inadequate saving, and declining production profits were the sore spots.

Nor are prospects for 1994 clear. Not only will the aforementioned factors persist, but the main forces driving growth are already beginning to flag. That being the case, it will not be easy to equal last year's results this year, whether in terms of growth, the industrial effort, price trends, or the exchange rate.

1. Economic growth: According to the DNP [National Department of Planning], the Colombian economy grew at a rate of 5.16 percent in 1993. If one excludes coffee, the figure rises to 6.46 percent. This is unquestionably a good effort, given the fact that it is the highest of the past five years. Furthermore, it was achieved in a context of low growth rates for the world economy and three years into the process of opening up the nation's economy.

The pattern is uniform if one proceeds by sector. Financial and personal services rose over 6 percent, electricity, gas, and water by 12.6 percent, and construction by 9.3 percent. Agriculture, industry, and mining were below the general average (2.7, 1.9, and .1 percent respectively).

Measures were recently adopted to restrict credit for the purpose of reducing liquidity and forcing a decline in overall demand. While this alternative does contribute to the anti-inflationary policy, it is disturbing in short-range terms that one would opt to limit demand instead of stimulating productive activity, given the existing productive capacity.

2. Manufacturing industry: According to figures supplied by DANE [National Administrative Department of Statistics], growth including coffee was 4.1 percent at the close of 1993 and 6.03 percent without it. The trend was not

uniform throughout all sectors, however. In fact, roughly 44 percent of our industrial production, which generates 36 percent of all manufacturing jobs, is currently at a standstill or deteriorating. It is important to stress the extraordinary effort of the equipment and transport sector (45.9 percent), which was largely responsible for driving industrial growth. If we exclude this sector from the total including coffee, growth falls from 4.11 to a fairly unsatisfactory 1.8 percent. Nor did sectors linked to construction activity have a strong showing.

In 1993, problems of profitability arose related to the process of opening up the market. On the one hand, sectors that ship a large share of their production to the foreign market were affected by the slow rate of devaluation.

On the other hand, other sectors that focus more on the domestic market face competition from imports, both legal and illegal, competition that has prevented them from adjusting their prices based on cost trends. This is the case of tobacco, paper, rubber and rubber products, chemical substances, and professional and scientific equipment. Industry's prospects for 1994 are uncertain, although there is good reason to be optimistic about certain sectors. In its Macroeconomic Plan, the DNP predicts growth of 4 to 4.5 percent in the industrial GDP, explained by the increase in the amount of capital accumulated and expansion in overall demand.

Factors that may stimulate industrial activity include the following: the foreseeable recovery of the world economy; moderation of inflationary trends; investments in development of the hydrocarbon sector; the vigor of public spending; growth in the construction industry, although at a slower rate than in the past; the anticipated expansion of regional markets as a result of integration; improved competitiveness resulting from decisions to convert and modernize production; and the availability of credit.

The uncertainty in question results from: rising production costs associated with social security; the drop in real wages and increasing difficulties faced by regional economies, particularly Venezuela; the expectation of a larger revaluation; the persistent replacement of national production by imports; and the declining vigor of the automotive sector.

3. Inflation: One has to recognize that the current administration managed to check the upward trend of prices since the latter half of the 1980's. Industrial prices have demonstrated behavior consistent with the goal of reducing inflation. This situation is in contrast with the evolution in goods and services provided by the government, which have stayed at a level far above the general average. The reduction in the general level of prices was achieved at the expense of agriculture.

For 1994, the government has proposed consumer inflation of around 19 percent. While this is a desirable goal, one does perceive any number of factors that could compromise its achievement. Topping the list is the fact that the agricultural sector will not continue to make a significant contribution to any reduction in the general level of prices. It is a fact to be taken into account when one considers that without the agricultural sector, the consumer price index has fluctuated about 25 percent over the past two years. At the same time, fiscal management and the control of those prices which the government does regulate will be fundamental if the goal is to be achieved. In this connection, one must recognize the government's commitment to adjusting rates to the anticipated rate of inflation.

In other words, the major responsibility for meeting the goal of inflation set clearly falls on the government's shoulders. This is particularly so when one considers the fact that in industry and agriculture as well, the margin left for raising prices has been cut, among other reasons, by exposure to foreign competition.

Business Council Suggests Policy Priorities

94CA0106A Santa Fe de Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 11 Apr 94 pp 1, 2B

[Article by Hector Hernandez M.: " '94-'98: A More Open Market, But Implemented Better"]

[Text] The main business associations intend to tell the new president what our development priorities for the immediate future must be. The revaluation and lack of innovation are their main concerns.

Our country's best development option is to open the market, but major adjustments will have to be made by the next government, particularly in terms of implementation.

If we are to battle crime and guerrilla-backed violence, we shall not only be forced to consolidate justice, but to strengthen the government's ability to maintain law and order. Nor can the possibility of negotiating with armed groups be ruled out.

This the view which the country's main business associations take of national development priorities in the years lying ahead. By June of this year, the National Council of Associations (CNG) will have finished drafting a program containing proposals to be presented to the next president-elect on how to handle the country's economic, political, and social issues.

The DIARIO ECONOMICO obtained a copy of the second draft of the associations' program. In it, they express great concern over the process of revaluing the peso, a process that "may be stepped up in the future."

The associations believe that it is important for the government to intervene in markets, but solely for the purpose of correcting distortions. However, with respect to technological innovation and social management, they hint that it should take more direct action than it has heretofore done.

The program says that in the future, it will be of exceeding importance to use concerted action as a tool to

consolidate democracy. It announces that business associations will participate in the various legally constituted councils and commissions in order to reach agreement with the government on such issues as maintaining high rates of growth and employment, lowering inflation, and achieving better planning.

Better Execution

"In the debate on the future role of the Colombian Government and its priorities, rather than questioning its active role in areas such as infrastructure, education, science and technology, law enforcement, the adoption of market reforms, and the need to give top priority to reaching the poorest population groups, it would be more appropriate to question how this redefinition of the method and field of government action has been expressed in practical terms," one draft says.

Concerning the new system of overall social security, it states that an attempt must be made to apply it "as a key policy in order to provide stability for the model of development."

It admits that while so-called social spending as a proportion of the gross domestic product has gradually begun to climb again in the 1990's, "it is still below levels reached in the mid '80's and remains far below national needs."

This and other problems remain unsolved: inadequate execution of the budget and weak, uncoordinated social institutions, combined with a lack of coherent medium- and long-term programs.

With respect to how the exchange rate is to be handled, the production associations say, "it has been observed that because of its constitutional mandate to oversee the purchasing power of the currency, the new monetary authority (the board of directors of the Bank of the Republic) is not in a position to impede this process affecting the behavior of the production of salable goods. It will have to take an in-depth look at future trends of the macroeconomic variables having the greatest impact on the price of the currency and propose policies preventing any spread of the so-called "Dutch disease."

They agree that because of problems besetting agriculture such as climatic changes and sudden variations in foreign prices for agricultural products, subsidies must be instituted for the sector, but of a type that will not "weaken the ability to compete with other related activities, if one wants to avoid the cost of extending protection to the rest of the productive system."

The draft exhibits a tendency to give priority to the conservation of natural resources over their indiscriminate exploitation aimed at improving the economic situation.

"If it is to be consolidated in long-range terms, the new model of development will require policies making it sustainable. There is increasing awareness of the need to face up to the depletion of natural resources, put a stop to alarming pollution, and adopt a different type of urban development that will halt the decline in the quality of life in our cities and make it possible to accommodate the projected population increase without undue trauma."

Justice, Lack of Safety, and Violence

In order to face the challenge of violence and crime, the National Council of Business Associations maintains that not only will it be necessary to consolidate justice as democracy's instrument par excellence for solving social conflicts, but also to strengthen the government's ability to maintain law and order. "Colombia is one of the most violent countries in the world and has in recent years been forced to face a resurgence of what experts call "organized violence," which is linked to guerrilla movements, drug trafficking, and organized crime."

The various methods "will therefore require complex solutions in terms of their options, including a possible attempt on the part of the government to engage in negotiations that might lead armed groups to disarm."

"In terms of daily violence," the document says, "in addition to strengthening the police, we must undertake more complex action aimed at countering its causes, which include a lack of flexible legal means to resolve conflicts, weapons possession, the use of alcohol and drugs, inadequate monitoring of the conduct of administrative officials, and the lack of educational and recreational facilities."

Finally, the business associations are not attacking the Gaviria government, but rather, trying to project their own model into the future.

Peru

Legal Institute Director Believes Army 'Massacred' Peasants

PY0705025794 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 22 Apr 94 p A4

[Text] The Human Rights Coordinating Board has requested that the Red Cross Organization verify reports of alleged murders in the area where the Army is attacking the so-called "Popular Guerrilla Army," the armed branch of the Shining Path [SL], which is comprised of some 250 men armed with North Korean AKM rifles.

The Human Rights Coordinating Board, however, disclosed information according to which Army troops had allegedly murdered innocent people with no clash having taken place, but Rosa Mujica, board president, admitted that they lack information on the exact number of victims. The Coordinating Board nevertheless demanded that the military offensive be suspended.

EXPRESO yesterday interviewed Ernesto de La Jara, president of the Institute for Legal Defense, who went to the zone where the alleged massacre took place.

[EXPRESO] What did you see?

[De La Jara] I spoke to many locals. Even we were surprised. An incredible number of civilians have been massacred in a zone where there are no Shining Path members. We received the direct testimony of terrified people, who had managed to get away after many days. I have no political interest. We couldn't believe what they told us, we couldn't understand why this had happened.

[EXPRESO] Do you mean to say that the SL is not in that area?

[De La Jara] The SL is not in the zone where these people were massacred, that is, on the left margin of the Huallaga River, in front of Anda and Aucayacu, in the villages of Moena and Moyuna. The SL is further inland. The people are terrified of the SL. They want them to be completely wiped out. They say: "Go in and kill the SL members, but not us." Many people do not even belong to the zone; they come for the harvest season and leave.

[EXPRESO] Why would the Army attack a zone where there are no SL members?

[De La Jara] The head of the political-military front believes that all the people of that zone belong to the SL, because the SL has been through there many times. It is as if businessmen who have paid protection fees were members of the SL. We are talking about humble people with no resources...

[EXPRESO] Where have you been?

[De La Jara] We tried to enter the zone, but were not allowed to do so. But a priest, Father Gilberto Hume, did...

[EXPRESO] But who warned you?

[De La Jara] The people of the zone who managed to get away and come to Lima, people from the church. The bishop of Artales, Huanuco, has agreed to go now...

[EXPRESO] Don't you think the SL itself got you to go to the zone?

[De La Jara] The SL has been defeated; it is not capable of that. It is a matter of going to the zone to see and hear what the people have to say. Several witnesses have talked about 40 or 50 people. Others say more...

[EXPRESO] But there might be SL members, there might have been a battle.

[De La Jara] But there have been no clashes...

[EXPRESO] How do you know?

[De La Jara] The witnesses, the peasants said so. They say that first they appeared with helicopters and machine guns. Later on, Army troops destroyed and burned the huts. Those who managed to get away by hiding were the ones who told us what had happened.

[EXPRESO] But it might have been SL members or people handled by the SL.

[De La Jara] It is a question of seeing and listening to them. They are humble people, in tears, terrified. They would have to have been very good actors.

[EXPRESO] The nucleus of the Popular Guerrilla Army is supposed to be there.

[De La Jara] Further inland, at a great distance. In a completely different zone...

[EXPRESO] They might have gone through that zone. What makes no sense is that the Army should have gone in to kill just for fun.

[De La Jara] I repeat, there have been no clashes. They were machine-gunned from helicopters. The plan was to kill everyone in the zone. We have the testimony of a great number of witnesses... Moreover, the way they kill people is atrocious, and this was said by several people: They rip babies out of pregnant women, they let people bleed to death, autopsies have been practiced. We do not even want an investigation. We want the operation to end. We have a copy of the testimony before the Huanuco prosecutor's office of a woman explaining how they killed her husband and eight peasants in front of her, and how eight members of the patrol raped her and 10 raped a 13-year-old girl. It is terrifying, unexplainable.

Discovered Bodies Said To Belong to Shining Path Commanders

PY0705011994 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 26 Apr 94 p A1

[Article by Jose Antonio Indacochea Alvarez]

[Text] Tingo Maria, 25 Apr—General Alfredo Rodriguez Riveros, chief of the Huallaga Front, said that the bodies found buried in a grave in the Shapingo sector (Moyuna) yesterday by members of the Human Rights Commission of the Democratic Constituent Congress belong to two Shining Path "commanders" of a group that operates in this zone.

He said this was determined by the testimony of three repented Shining Path members who were under the command of one of them, and also from intelligence information.

Other military chiefs said the dead were known as "Comrade Mardonio" and "Comrade Abel" of the logistical and military commands, respectively, of the so-called 3d Batallion of the Moena-Moyuno People's Committee.

"Comrade Abel" supposedly is peasant Felix Loyola who, according to his wife and relatives, was a coca

grower who had his farm in this sector and was shot by soldiers when he was leaving the area.

Gen. Rodriguez presumes that the bodies belong to some of the six terrorists killed by a militay patrol on 8 April in a clash in another sector of Moyuna, about three to four hours by foot into the jungle.

He said that all the information will be given to provincial Prosecutor Carlos Gonzalez Ortiz, who is investigating this case to gain more evidence to clarify the killings.

Regarding the bones found in the Carmen Alto zone (near the port of Moyuna de Anda), he said that according to preliminary information the bones have been there for several years.

Police Capture 'Important' MRTA Leader, Seize Weapons

PY0705031594 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0130 GMT 7 May 94

[Text] One of the most important leaders of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement [MRTA] has been captured. He is Emilio Villalobos, a member of the MRTA national executive committee, who is considered the brain behind the kidnapping of several businessmen.

Dincote [Counterterrorism Directorate] today exhibited Villalobos and six other subversives who were captured in the operation labeled Alacran-3. Weapons were also seized during the operation.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] The terrorists who were captured during the Alacran-3 operation were responsible for several attacks, kidnappings, and the murders of several businessmen, including (David Bayon Vera), (Pedro Antonio Miyasato), and (Fernando Manrique Azevedo). Their capture helped to prevent the kidnapping of businessmen (Mitchel Stafford) and (Andreas Bekermayer). The subversives who were arrested in Lima, Barranca, and Arequipa are the following [passage indistinct].

Villalobos, considered one of the most important leaders of the MRTA, coordinated actions with Ernesto Serpa Cartolini and Miguel Rincon Rincon, who are still at large. The police found ammunition and weapons of various calibers, communications equipment, subversive propaganda, police uniforms, and money. [end recording]

Uruguay

Government 'Opposed to All Unilateral Actions in Haiti'

PY0605151294 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1428 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] Montevideo, 6 May (EFE)—Foreign Minister Sergio Abreu announced today that Uruguay is opposed to all unilateral actions in Haiti and will promote a rapid OAS intervention to prevent a deterioration of the situation in the Caribbean island.

"Uruguay is a staunch defender of the principle of non-intervention and the self-determination of nations," said Abreu during a news conference with international correspondents in Montevideo.

He stressed his country's concern over an eventual unilateral U.S. intervention to resolve the crisis in Haiti.

Foreign Minister Outlines 'Preventive Diplomacy' on Haiti

PY0705001694 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1556 GMT 6 May 94

[Article by Alberto Pepe Leira]

[Text] Montevideo, 6 May (EFE)—Uruguay today implemented preventive diplomatic action against the possible unilateral intervention by the United States in Haiti which, in the opinion of Uruguayan Foreign Minister Sergio Abreu, would aggravate an already very serious situation in Haiti.

During a news conference for foreign journalists, Abreu stated that his country opposes any type of unilateral action in Haiti, and has called for rapid action by the OAS for an in-depth study of the crisis being experienced by the Caribbean nation.

The meeting that has been called for today in Washington by the Permanent Council of the OAS, at the petition of Uruguay, is the first concrete action to be carried out after reports were disseminated in the U.S. press regarding a possible unilateral U.S. military action.

Asked about the international community's possible lateness in acting against the problem that arose after the coup d'etat against constitutional President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who is currently in exile in the United States, Abreu stated that Uruguay backs the Governor's Island Agreements that were signed in 1993, and does not want the situation to deteriorate.

OAS actions will be based on the latest reports and proposals made by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, whose members will once again visit Haiti to determine the seriousness of the deterioration of individual rights.

The Commission will visit the island between 16 and 20 May, and its members will meet with Haitian personalities and citizens.

The foreign minister stated that his country is promoting the "political receptiveness to beginning to work more profoundly for a diplomacy that attempts to prevent a unilateral armed action, which would cause a deterioration in the situation and would favor no one."

"Uruguay is a jealous defender of nonintervention, and is willing to work for and support all leads toward a solution," the foreign minister stressed.

Abreu acknowledged that up to the present time there has been no success, but he insisted that "armed unilateral intervention is not the solution."

The foreign minister reported that he has the support of Brazil, Chile, and Bolivia after rapid telephone conversations with his colleagues and with the Mexican Embassy to evaluate the matter and to prevent a possible unilateral armed intervention.

"Our country will support every lead toward a solution that is undertaken within the bounds of international law and by competent organizations," the minister said.

The Uruguayan foreign minister summed up his position by indicating that in view of the seriousness of the Haitian crisis it is urgent that it be "discussed within an atmosphere of preventive diplomacy."

"Uruguay does not support individual action, but does support multilateral action," he stressed.

Uruguayan diplomacy indicates that the reactivation of and new dimensions for the OAS will be a fundamental step in resolving the Haitian crisis.

"The principles of nonintervention and self-determination are not negotiable," the foreign minister insisted, in explaining how the work to promote "preventive diplomacy" will be carried out.

Foreign Minister Confirms Uruguayan Commitment to Mercosur

PY0705005194 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1805 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] Montevideo, 6 May (EFE)—Foreign Minister Sergio Abreu has confirmed to foreign correspondents that his country's stance on Mercosur [Common Market of the South] is to consolidate it. He nonetheless conceded that "as in any integration process, the road is paved with difficulties."

He moreover pointed out that with regard to the controversial issue of duty free zones, his country "will neither change its position nor make any concessions, because the private sector—the one that invests there—needs clear and predictable rules of the game." Besides, he contended that it has been "proven" that for Uruguay "it is a very useful tool for achieving development."

Abreu denied that Uruguay will withdraw from negotiations over the common external tariff. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that one or two officials might have voiced their personal opinions, which do not reflect the government's official position. The government never "as an institution entertained the idea of leaving Mercosur, or voiced a desire to do so."

Abreu's remarks were made during a news conference, following the release of press reports on 5 May which, citing government officials, indicated that Uruguay had decided to withdraw from negotiations until Brazil had explained its proposal to establish a South American Free Trade Area (SAFTA).

The foreign minister stated that "to date, Uruguay's strategy and position are clearly known to be in favor of the consolidation of Mercosur in all its manifestations." He explained that these consist of "the enhancement of free trade zones, which will have been concluded by the end of the year with the exception of the Treaty of Asuncion for Uruguay and Paraguay, and the definition of the common external tariff."

Abreu added that this will not necessarily entail establishing a customs union, "which needs other instruments for its creation, such as the system of origin, clear rules and regulations on exceptions in foreign trade, and also aspects that have to do with the settlement of controversies." He underlined that the countries are undertaking "a gradual process in a negotiation that is by no means easy."

The foreign minister reported that there is consensus between the four Mercosur partners—Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay—on 85 percent of the subjects pertaining to the common external tariff. Despite this, he noted that three major sectors "that are very sensitive to the two more developed economies, Brazil and Argentina, namely capital goods, the petrochemical industry, and computer science," are still pending.

Abreu said that Uruguay, like the other member countries, is studying the Brazilian proposal for creating SAFTA, which has to be improved to make it compatible with Mercosur's political projects and with the other integration endeavors.

Abreu believes that SAFTA "is Brazil's absolutely understandable reaction to NAFTA" in defense of South American trade.

Insisting on defending tax-free zones, the minister said that once the common external tariff is set "we will know what type of integration we want and what type of protection from third countries we will have."

Abreu considered the common external tariff to be "of prime importance, and it will affect the free zones, which Uruguay will not change."

The minister pointed out that the economies of some regions of the country need to be bolstered, and duty free zones are an appropriate means for doing so.

Brazil and Argentina have not accepted Uruguay's system of free zones, even though Abreu said that "there are different opinions" on it, though no "major opposition."

Venezuela

Caldera, Colombia's Gaviria Hold News Conference

PA0605215094 Caracas Radio and Television Networks in Spanish 1847 GMT 6 May 94

[News conference by President Rafael Caldera and Colombian President Cesar Gaviria Trujillo with domestic and foreign reporters, moderated by Guillermo Alvarez Bajares, chief of the Venezuelan Central Information Office, from the Ayacucho Room of Miraflores Palace in Caracas—live relay]

[Text] [Alvarez] Let's begin with Mr. Luis Eduardo Maldonado, representing Colombian radio stations.

[Maldonado] President Gaviria, you are about to complete four years in office. How are relations with Venezuela? Are they better off, the same, or worse, and in what area?

[Gaviria] Before answering your questions, I want to reiterate what I said this morning: The Colombian president's happiness in coming here with all the Colombian cabinet members—an unprecedented action in Colombian politics—to express to President Caldera and all the Venezuelan people our solidarity, and our willingness to continue working in the area of integration, which has been so fruitful and positive.

During this special working session held today with President Caldera and all the members of his cabinet and Venezuelan officials, we discussed all the areas which advanced during the last few years. We discussed how close the relationship has become and how much we have advanced in trade and in many other aspects. We discussed how useful the mechanism of the negotiation and integration commission has been. We also established new goals and objectives. We reviewed progress in many positive aspects and how new problems have appeared, some of which are growing problems; but this is normal in a relationship, one sharing a 2,200 km border, that has advanced so much.

Our government's assessment of relations with Venezuela is that the integration process has been very fruitful and positive. We—Colombia and Venezuela— have the most advanced commercial and integration process in the developing world today. We must continue to further that process. We must continue to resolve controversies and problems. We must resolve together the problems we are facing and open new possibilities for integration.

[Alvarez] Lucy Faustino, representing Venezuelan television stations.

[Faustino] My question is addressed to the Colombian president. One week ago you told an international news agency the following, and I quote: We are always going to have problems in relations with Venezuela. The important thing is to deal with the problems patiently. In light of those words, which can somehow be interpreted as an unrealistic definition of the coexistence of binational relations, how can Venezuelans interpret your words? Can we expect effective results from this summit to overcome those problems you addressed? Can you briefly summarize those problems you deem most important?

For Venezuelan President Rafael Caldera, I would like to know if you agree with your colleague's view, and do you term it optimistic, pessimistic, or realistic?

[Gaviria] I think it is unrealistic to think we will only advance in positive aspects. We have made significant progress regarding trade over the past years, and we are reaching the $2 billion figure in trade. We have made significant progress regarding investments, and it is public knowledge how Colombian investments have increased in Venezuela and vice versa. We have progressed in transportation, physical integration, and our open skies policy.

The negotiation commissions have done a great job and have advanced in designing proposals and solutions in the area of basins, immigration, river navigation, and border delimitation. In all these aspects, an important and interesting job has been done, but, obviously, the border is a long one. Exchange brings about new problems. The greater flow of people brings new problems. The immigration issue remains unresolved, and it has even been complicated furthered by kidnappings and car thefts. One can even say certain problems—drug-trafficking problems—have worsened. Regarding this, there is a new relationship between the Armed Forces, particularly since 1988, which is helping to resolve these problems.

We must be realistic. We have made significant progress, but we still have problems that must be dealt with. We cannot rip our clothes apart, nor can we cry out every time there is a conflict, every time an incident occurs.

We all have to try and pay attention and resolve such incidents, conflicts, and problems, within the framework of this relationship. This is a relationship between sister nations, nations that have found integration, nations that have found the developing world's most advanced system of integration. By the same token, we must realize that because of this, we will never have a relationship free of conflicts or incidents. What we have to do is face them constructively and positively, without making a big deal out of every incident; that would be a mistake of which our children and descendants would never forgive us. They will never forgive us if we try to turn each small incident into a conflict.

[Alvarez] So we do not create any bad habits. I believe that later we should ask President Caldera to answer that same question, when he answers another question. William Parra, representing Colombian television.

[Parra] Colombia has stood out among the nations of the world, because it has paid the highest price in the anti-drug-trafficking fight; unfortunately, there is news regarding Colombia's proud struggle. The Constitutional

Court has decided to legalize a specific drug dose for personal use. What is the Colombian president's response to the Constitutional Court's decision, especially in light of the unanimous rejection expressed by Colombian sectors? There is even a letter from the business associations stating that if Colombia and the government want to hold a referendum to reject the court's decision, they are willing to pay for all the publicity. What is the Colombian president's response to this, and what kind of image does this create abroad of the country's anti-drug-trafficking struggle?

[Gaviria] I gave a full response to that before I left this morning, but allow me to explain something quickly now. We will abide by the Constitutional Court's decision, but we do not agree with it. We do not agree because of the serious effects it could have on Colombians' health. This can create violence. We do not agree with the rationale behind the decision, which says this is something concerning the development of one's personality. We are highly concerned with this, and we must wait for the ruling to be handed down. The decision was mad, but the ruling has not been issued yet. We hope the Colombian Congress will be able to issue a law establishing limits, which is required for such a decision. I am referring to the limits that should be established for consumption by children and teenagers, consumption in schools and public places, preventing drivers and pilots from using drugs, and all these other normal restrictions any community must impose when taking such a step.

There should be clear provisions for people to be able to appeal for and receive medical treatment for drug consumption. I do not believe the Colombian community or society can in any way accept drug consumption as something good or as something against which it cannot fight. The president has also said that in countries or in U.S. states where this decision has been adopted, this has been a decision made by citizens or their representatives. This should not be a judicial decision but, rather, a decision of the Colombian parliament, the Colombian Congress, preceded by a public discussion on the implications of such a decision, such as health and family considerations; in fact, I have mentioned the possibility of a referendum, for which our Constitution provides.

[Alvarez] Miss Paola Badaraco, representing Venezuelan newspapers.

[Badaraco] Good afternoon, Mr. President. Together with the question asked by my colleague from your country, I would like to know or advise you that in Venezuela, a judge from the state of Tachira has just released 32 people implicated in the laundering of drug money. Do not both of you, the two presidents, fear that the struggle against drugs could founder in light of such decisions by the judicial branch? Thank you.

[Gaviria] It would seem to be a question for... [pauses] That is news to me. Well, yes. What Colombia's Constitutional Court decided in principle—I say in principle, because only an announcement on a decision has been made, not a ruling—is to eliminate sanctions or penalties for personal drug consumption. They invalidated the provision stating that personal drug use was a violation of Colombian legislation.

The president of Colombia's Constitutional Court clearly said that this does not mean that drug trafficking will now be legal. The sanctions set forth in our codes for drug trafficking and drug production remain unchanged. This only refers to the elimination of penalties for personal drug use. As far as I understand, the court invalidated the articles establishing arrest for this type of violation.

This in no way weakens the struggle against the drug cartels or drug traffickers. I am sure Colombian society would never take such a step, much less at the international level.

[Alvarez] Maria Elizabeth Vargas, representing Colombian press.

[Vargas] Good afternoon, Messrs. Presidents. How does the recent devaluation of the bolivar affect bilateral agreements, and what kinds of agreements were reached?

[Gaviria] I would say this is basically a question for the Colombian president—a question on how decisions adopted by Venezuela regarding its currency can affect the agreements we have signed. Today, for the first time, the economic cabinets of both countries held their meetings, despite the fact that they had a framework for solutions within the bilateral integration agreements. They held the first meeting today and reviewed the situation, and let us say they did so within the terms of the agreements of the two countries with other regions and with the G-3 [Group of Three], of the agreements with Central America and the need to boost these accords, of the agreements with the Caribbean, and also a review of the macroeconomic situation. We are alert, and we are keeping abreast of what is happening. Colombia, obviously, is not going to make any decision.

Colombia hopes to assimilate the exchange rate decisions made by the Central Bank and the Venezuelan Government. We hope these economic decisions adopted by President Caldera's administration will in no way alter our integration process. We do not plan to adopt any measure to affect that integration process.

We trust in this process and have found Colombia's participation in this process to be enriching. We hope to contribute to help Venezuela overcome its recent economic difficulties. For this, President Caldera, his government, and the Venezuelan people can count on our full support.

[Alvarez] Representing international news agencies based in Venezuela, Mr. Roberto Cienfuegos.

[Cienfuegos] Good afternoon, Messrs. Presidents. Representatives of your governments and of Mexico are meeting today in Santa Fe de Bogota to analyze the future of the G-3. My question is this: When do you plan to culminate

the free trade agreement that you proposed? Also, excuse me, but this question is being asked throughout the region: Will President Gaviria, when he assumes his post in the OAS, commit his efforts toward Cuba's total reintegration into this organization? Thank you.

[Gaviria] I will respond regarding the G-3. The will of the two economic groups of both countries—the one expressed by all members of the economic cabinets—was clear-cut in wanting to culminate the G-3 agreement soon and to proceed to sign it.

We all agree that the G-3 is very important and serves as the focal point of economic integration with the Caribbean, Central America, and a large portion of South America. Also, we hope the few differences we still have can be resolved promptly. Negotiations are taking place in Santa Fe de Bogota today, as one journalist has already noted. We hope that the process can be finalized.

Today, President Caldera and I are hoping—and we have already taken steps to place the telephone call—to call Mexican President Carlos Salinas to reaffirm our political commitment and our wish to finalize the G-3. The ministers of the two countries have made this recommendation to us, and we have accepted it. As soon as this news conference is over, President Caldera and I hope to talk to President Salinas.

As for Cuba, I would simply like to make a very broad statement, because I cannot take action on this issue without the mandate of the organization after I have assumed the post of secretary general. I think all Latin Americans, without exception, believe... [pauses] We want Cuba's reincorporation into the inter-American system. Nevertheless, we also want political and economic changes to take place in that country, making this reintegration possible. All of us want democratic progress in Cuba, as well as progress toward a market economy. I think all of us in general agree on using diplomacy to achieve these ends.

[Alvarez] Here is Raul Gutierrez, on behalf of Colombia-based international correspondents.

[Gutierrez] Mr. Caldera, the thorny issue in relations between the two countries is the border dispute. Looking ahead to when President Gaviria steps down, are you considering the possibility of direct talks within an international court or the termination of this border dispute?

[Caldera] Venezuela has been in favor of the idea of dialogue. There is no reason to interrupt it. The talks held between the commissions appointed a few years ago have explored many paths toward resolving this dispute. Many steps have been taken toward understanding and recognizing the importance and significance of demarcation. We have agreed on the need for a global approach. This is not the only country, not the only problem, and should not be considered a thorn in anyone's side.

As President Gaviria has said, there naturally will be problems between two countries with such a long-lived border—countries that feature so many various interests. There will be more problems in the future. Nevertheless, there are no differences that cannot be resolved through dialogue, and there is no dialogue that cannot lead to a solution, especially when there is an awareness of the need and the willingness to become integrated.

[Gaviria] I would briefly like to reiterate what I told the negotiating commissions this morning. The Colombian Government has complete confidence in the mechanisms on which Colombia and Venezuela have agreed to resolve this and other problems between the two countries. Here, I am talking about direct dialogue and negotiations, as well as the negotiating commissions themselves—mechanisms that we regard as adequate for resolving not only the border dispute, but also the problems of immigration and river navigation, problems shared by the two governments.

The political forces of both countries have been represented in this process of negotiations and talks. We believe these mechanisms are proper and appropriate, and we also believe that the overall approach has made it possible to make great progress in the resolution of common problems and to take positive steps in the economic, physical, and cultural integration of the two countries.

[Alvarez] The final question of this news conference will be asked by Mr. Jose Lugo, who is representing the Venezuelan radio stations.

[Lugo] Good afternoon to both presidents. This question is for Mr. Gaviria, and here I am departing a bit from the area of bilateral relations.

Considering the support extended to you by the U.S. Government in your bid to become the next OAS secretary general, what position will you adopt, once you are in that post, concerning the announcement of an intensification of the blockade against Haiti and the possibility of a military invasion of that Caribbean island?

[Gaviria] I have decided not to play the role of OAS secretary general until after I am sworn in. I do not intend to express any OAS-related views until I assume the position. Currently, I am the president of Colombia, and I will not express any views on any issue except as president of Colombia. I will express those views at the appropriate forums, the OAS and United Nations, if those topics are discussed there. As president of Colombia, however, I believe that I speak for my country when I say that all of us truly yearn to see the full restoration of democracy in Haiti through the appropriate mechanisms.

[Alvarez] Thank you, Messrs. Presidents, for your presence at this news conference, and thanks to all of the journalists of Colombia and Venezuela.

Student Riots Suspend Caracas Subway Operations 6 May

PA0605235494 Paris AFP in Spanish 2244 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] Caracas, 6 May (AFP)—Several bus lines and the Caracas subway, which carries 1 million passengers daily, suspended operations for several hours today after students took to the streets to protest Thursday's killing of a fellow student. To prevent acts of vandalism, hundreds of police officers were deployed along the city's main streets.

Nevertheless, an official VENPRES report indicates that students from the Santos Michelena and Rafael Urdaneta high schools unleashed their anger on the San Jose police station, throwing stones and bottles that destroyed glass doors and windows.

Thursday morning, student German Sotillo Rodriguez, 17, died from three gunshot wounds during disturbances staged by students from the Fermin Toro High School near the Miraflores presidential palace. The students were protesting a refusal by city bus drivers to honor preferential student fares.

Authorities have confirmed that the student was killed by Raul Izea Bohorquez, a metropolitan police officer, who will be turned over to the courts.

Further on Clashes

PA0705024994 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0104 GMT 7 May 94

[Text] Caracas, 6 May (NOTIMEX)—A demonstration by students who were protesting the death of one of their classmates yesterday overshadowed the nine-hour meeting held by the presidents of Venezuela and Colombia.

Barely two blocks away from Miraflores presidential palace, Fermin Toro High School students who were holding a vigil for slain student German Sotillo, whom police shot to death, became too excited and clashed with the public security forces.

Presidents Cesar Gaviria and Rafael Caldera had to meet exclusively at Miraflores and not at the Foreign Ministry, where the signing of a joint document had been scheduled.

Even though the authorities were able to momentarily dissuade the demonstrators, who were protesting because bus drivers were not accepting preferential fares for students, clashes became more intense during the afternoon, when Sotillo was buried.

Following the funeral at a cemetery in this capital attended by approximately 5,000 high school students and people from various social organizations, violence returned to the streets of downtown Caracas, but there were no reports of casualties.

The Judicial Technical Police, in a last-minute report, stated the officer who fired the shots that killed Sotillo and wounded three other students confessed and was immediately arrested so that homicide charges would be brought against him. However, that announcement was unable to calm the angry students, whose protests spread to at least three other high schools in this capital.

In view of the prevailing tension and following the transportation sector's announcement to increase general bus fares, the students, including university students, announced that more protests were planned.

National Guard, Police Control Riots

PA0705042694 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 0245 GMT 7 May 94

[Report by Maria Lilibeth La Corte from the "Union Radio News" newscast]

[Text] Students who today accompanied the body of slain student German Sotillo Rodriguez to the Southern General Cemetery staged a march on (Baral) Avenue.

[Begin recording] [La Corte] As I said earlier, there were disturbances on (Baral) Avenue, but they were efficiently controlled by state security officers.

Students from the Fermin Toro High School burned a cargo truck with license plate 109ADS. With me now is Colonel Augusto Vera Lozada, chief of staff of Command No. 5. He will explain how the riots were controlled. Good afternoon, commander.

[Vera Lozada] Good afternoon. Our forces have been deployed to downtown Caracas to prevent violence; it is not our intention to harm anyone. We are trying to provide security to prevent the recurrence of incidents, and we will try to restore transportation in this sector.

[La Corte] I have been told of attempts to loot stores in this area. Is that true?

[Vera Lozada] No. So far nothing like that has happened. A (?truck) was burned in front of Fermin Toro High School, but the situation is under control.

[La Corte] Thank you, Col. Vera Lozada, who has informed us that the disturbances have been controlled, although a few students remain inside the school. However, the National Guard and the Metropolitan Police have surrounded all adjacent streets, including (Baral) Avenue and University Avenue, to guarantee the public's safety. The situation is virtually under control. [end recording]

Police on Alert Due to Strike

PA0805180894 Paris AFP in Spanish 1642 GMT 8 May 94

[Text] Caracas, 8 May (AFP)—Caracas police units have been placed on alert and will be deployed in the streets on Monday to prevent potential disturbances in light of

the complete work stoppage by 35,000 transportation drivers in the Venezuelan capital, it was reported this Sunday.

The transportation workers' show of force will effect 4 million Caracas residents, and it is possible that drivers in the countryside affiliated with the sole union of small transportation vans and buses (interprovincial vans and buses) will join the strike.

The drivers demand a readjustment in fare prices and the immediate payment of government commitments owed them since December under a subsidy agreement for student bus tickets.

Meanwhile, Sucre Municipality—the second largest municipality in the capital—prohibited public demonstrations and suspended all classes in its jurisdiction.

Political analysts recommended canceling classes throughout the capital to avoid disturbances such as those that occurred on Thursday, when a police officer killed student German Sotillo with three gunshots.

Deputy Transportation Minister Francisco Urdaneta met with transportation workers the previous evening and promised to pay the subsidy debt in full as of next week. The drivers, however, did not accept the offer and stated that the final hour had arrived.

Newspaper sources reported that given the looming difficult situation, an emergency unit was organized in Sucre Municipality by the Caracas Metropolitan Police, the Judicial Technical Police (PTJ-detectives), the Directorate of Intelligence and Preventive Services (Disip), and Civil Defense.

Their spokesmen assured that the officers of these police units are on a state of alert and are studying strategies to prevent street disturbances.

Policeman Reportedly Kills Student During Protest

PA0605021794 Caracas Radio Nacional de Venezuela Canal Clasico Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 5 May 94

[From "The National Newscast"]

[Text] [words indistinct] today Thursday during student disturbances that took place a short distance from the Miraflores presidential building.

German Sotillo, a 16-year-old student, died after he was shot three times. According to students and professors of the Fermin Toro Secondary School, Sotillo was shot by a police officer who was riding on a water cannon that was being used to disperse the demonstrators.

The students were protesting against bus drivers who have been ignoring their right to preferential fares. The bus drivers, meanwhile, argue that since last year the government has failed to adequately subsidize the students' reduced fares.

[In a related 210-word, Caracas-datelined report, Madrid EFE in Spanish at 1550 GMT on 5 May quotes a police source saying, "the student was shot by unidentified individuals from a passing vehicle." Two other students also were reported to have been wounded by gunfire. After Sotillo was shot and killed, students threw rocks at police, who responded by firing tear gas grenades into the crowd to disperse the demonstrators.]

District Governor Retires Police Command

PA0605020294 Caracas Radio Nacional de Venezuela Canal Clasico Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 4 May 94

[From "The National Newscast"]

[Text] Federal District Governor Asdrubal Aguiar has decided to retire the Metropolitan Police's Commissioners Command. When the governor explained the reasons that prompted his decision, he said the following:

[Begin Aguiar recording] I have adopted a decision, of which I have notified the Metropolitan Police Commander General, to retire all of the Metropolitan Police's High Command members who include eight general commissioners and six chief commissioners.

I consider this to be a sound measure for two reasons: On the one hand, it is essential to renew and revitalize the Metropolitan Police's actions; on the other hand, it is essential to allow some fresh air into its ranks. Moreover, the group of men who comprise the High Command, and who have rendered a valuable service to the Venezuelan Police and have exerted their best efforts in the struggle against crime, have been in active service for an average of 33 or 34 years.

I believe the time has come—and I instructed the Metropolitan Police commander general accordingly—for those eight general commissioners and six chief commissioners, a total of 14, to make way for the cadre of commissioners and inspectors who have graduated from the Metropolitan Police's University Institute. These men have received a refreshing education; they have new energy and vitality to prepare new plans and actions against crime in the capital of the Republic; and those who have rendered valuable services to the Metropolitan Police for 34, 35, or 36 years should finally receive the retirement and rest they deserve. They should help us as much as possible on an advisory level which will enable them to cooperate in any way they can with the capital. [end recording]

Politicians on Sale of Dollars by Central Bank

PA0505231194 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 5 May 94

[Report by Cecilia Cayone from the "180 Minutes of News" newscast]

[Text] Acting Treasury Minister Luis Javier Grisanti has said hasty purchases of dollars must be avoided, because the sale system at the Central Bank will offer greater transparency to the exchange market.

Regarding this measure, Segundo Melendez, leader of the MAS [Movement Toward Socialism] legislative wing, has termed the sale of foreign exchange as the most appropriate way to combat the escalation of the U.S. dollar. The MAS deputy explained the implementation of this exchange policy reveals the state has enough resources to solve the country's financial crisis.

Meanwhile, Henry Ramos Ayub, leader of the Democratic Action [AD] legislative wing, considered the sale of dollars by the Central Bank of Venezuela a necessary control measure, given the situation of collective irrationality. The AD deputy added exchange controls should have been established in the country long ago.

Jose Miguel Uzcategui, leader of the National Convergence, said the sale of dollars by the Central Bank is the most transparent exchange control that can be established.

In response to a poll conducted by Union Radio at the National Congress, most members of parliament agreed that the sale of dollars is a form of exchange control to contain the fears of citizens. In this regard, let us listen to Deputy Jose Miguel Uzcategui.

[Begin Uzcategui recording] All those authorized to carry out exchange transactions go to the Central Bank, which quotes a price, and based on that price they conduct the sale. This is the most transparent exchange control mechanism that exists in the world. It does not account for the abuses of rigid exchange controls that exist in Europe. These controls greatly limit the purchase and sale of foreign currency. [end recording]

Meanwhile, Gustavo Tarre Briceno, chairman of the lower chamber's Finance Commission, said the following.

[Begin Tarre Briceno recording] The first thing we must note is that there is no free sale of dollars. As a result, we are in the presence of a market subjected to some form of control. The sale mechanism is correct, because the demand will determine the value of the dollar within limited amounts offered for sale each day by the Central Bank. I think the closing of the market yesterday is more important than the dollar sale. By looking at how the day concluded yesterday, it appears nervousness is decreasing. [end recording]

Radical Cause Deputy Ali Rodriguez thinks the government is improvising.

[Begin Rodriguez recording] In any case, as we have stated systematically, we are responding to emergencies and we are not basing our response on a coherent strategic plan. I asked for the right to speak tomorrow at the Chamber of Deputies to discuss this crisis at the national level and its solution. [end recording]

In the meantime, AD thinks it is necessary to wait and see the results of this mechanism implemented by the executive branch.

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